

W H A T M E N C R A V E !

Kandy



3 TIPS TO RAISE
TESTOSTERONE LEVELS

BRITTANY'S WORLD
SEPTEMBER KRUSH

BRITTANY
DANYELLE

GERMANY'S
RAMONA BERNHARD
MOWS A LAWN KANDY STYLE

EMMA BROWN

FIT, SEXY & SANDY

4^{YR}
ANNIVERSARY
SPECTACULAR

PLUS

"BALLIN" WITH A MONEY TRUCK
MERCEDES-MAYBACH S600 PULLMAN
ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOM EXTENDED WHEELBASE
WHITEY BULGER'S STORY ON THE BIG SCREEN
MAD MAX, MADDEN NFL 16, NHL 16
METAL GEAR SOLID V: THE PHANTOM PAIN

Kandy MAGAZINE



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**4 Year Anniversary
Cover Model
EMMA BROWN**
Fit, Sexy, & Sandy

She sexed up the pages of Kandy in 2013. Now, she is back with her very first Kandy cover.



**September Krush
Brittany Danyelle**

We get lost in Brittany's World and it is a wonderful place.



**German Goddess
Ramona Bernhard**

Mows A Lawn Kandy Style
Blonde hair, blue eyed beauty Ramona Bernhard of Munich only had to ask us once if she could share with Kandy readers how she mows a lawn.



Tailgaters Extravaganza

Our Koncierge shares his best tailgating dish and gluten-free beer this month and our techies tip us on great apps to improve the tailgating experience.



Movies

Whitey Bulger's story comes to the big screen in Black Mass and we have Cooties fever!

PLUS GAMES, CARS & MORE

**Photos by:**

Charlie Suriano

Hair & MUA:

Shannon Palmer

Letter from the EDITOR

Fours ago we published the very first issue of Kandy magazine with cover model Tiffany Selby whom we proclaimed was “*sweeter than heaven, hotter than hell*”. They were actually her words but we still stand by those words today. Joining Tiffany in that very first issue were a few of the sexiest barristers to walk this planet-DJ Erra, Lilly Ghalichi and Niki Ghazian. Lilly may not have been in front of the camera but it was her swimwear, Swingerie, that was all over the pages of Kandy. Flash-forward four years to today, Tiffany has moved onto the world of real estate, Lilly stirred things up on Bravo TV’s *Shahs of Sunset*, and Niki is ‘winning’ in the courtroom.

We will never forget those early days. We celebrate four years this month with a trip around the globe, instead of around the courtroom. Cover model Emma Brown shot these exclusive photos for Kandy in her Australian homeland. If you have been a reader of Kandy for a couple years you may recall Emma first appeared in 2013’s top selling issue - October 2013 with Swedish cover model Dominica Westling. Will Emma once again be part of a top-selling issue? We like the odds.

Our international trip doesn’t end with Emma in Australia. Hailing from Germany, Ramona Bernhard shares with us how she mows a lawn, Kandy style. We think you’ll agree with us that from now on this is the only way we want to seeing sexy women dressed when working with machinery.

How can you travel around the globe and not start and end in the United States? Our September Krush Brittany Danyelle takes us deep into Brittany’s world. We’ve had hot steamy photos in Kandy in the past, these may top them all (you should see the ones left out!).

Finally, our writers are back from their summer siesta and tackle the NFL, tailgating and a few other Kandy staples – fitness, games, movies, and ultra-luxurious rides fit for world dictators. Although our screening room does not give this movie much coverage, I am personally looking forward to seeing in theatres *Black Mass* – the story of Boston crime boss Whitey Bulger, played by Johnny Depp. It is a fascinating story; interested to see how it plays out on the big screen.

There you have it, our past and our present. We’re very excited for our future and have a surprise or two lined up between now and year’s end. If you’ve enjoyed this issue or any of our previous issues please take a few moments to rate us in the App store. Every rating and review helps us in not only maintaining our top ranking but also in improving Kandy for you the reader!

Cheers!

KANDY GIRL NEWS



→ **Las Vegas, NV** - This past June, 52 Models from 20 different countries met to compete at one amazing event called the **Las Vegas International Model Search** held at the MGM Grand. The event was a week long, with various appearances by all the models at different venues for autographs signing and taking pictures with fans. The culmination of the week being the Pageant where the winner would be crowned.

As it turned out, 7 of our very own Kandy Girls were competing at the pageant. Kandy Photographer Mike Prado happened to be there and was able to get a great group shot with the “**Kandy Girl Magnificent 7**” at one of the promo events for the pageant.

Pictured above from Left to Right are:

Hollie Morgan (Krush - April 2014), Lucy Miller (Krush - March 2015), Rachel Elise & Emy Tres Jolie (Kandy Ghostown 2015), Catherine Elizabeth (International Kandy Girl 2014 - UK), Christina Riordan (Krush - July 2015) and Marissa Everhart (Krush - Sept 2014)

Pageants Results: All the Kandy Girls showed great poise and elegance throughout the competition. Our April 2014 Krush of the Month, Hollie Morgan came away from the pageant with the title of Miss Photogenic. Congrats to Hollie and all of our Kandy Girls!!!



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TIPS FOR NATURALLY RAISING TESTOSTERONE LEVELS

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Hey Kandy readers! Here's a topic that we all want to discuss, keeping our hormone levels, specifically testosterone levels as high and optimal as possible. Testosterone is the hormone that makes men, men. The higher we can keep it, the more muscle we can build, the better we can feel and most importantly, the better satisfied our woman will be in the bedroom.

1 Eating foods like red meat, eggs, shrimp and even strawberries can help keep your testosterone flowing high. Strawberries are high in Vitamin C, which can keep cortisol levels down, and cortisol is the enemy of testosterone. Shrimp is high in Vitamin D, which according to many studies, has a strong link to keeping T levels high. Red meat and eggs are high in cholesterol and testosterone is derived from cholesterol.

2 Rest. Getting at least 8 hours of sleep each night is important for everybody, especially people recovering from an active lifestyle and regular weight training/exercise. Sleep keeps cortisol in check, which, as I mentioned above, is the stress hormone that is the enemy to testosterone.

3 Take a supplement like ZMA or Tribulus Terrestris. Studies show that both supplements may increase testosterone in men. Having an adequate supply of zinc will allow the body a better release of testosterone.

If raising testosterone is important to you (and it should be if you're a man), these three tips are easy and simple. Give them a try and see how much more energy you have and how much stronger you are in the gym!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel Stevens is an Optimum Nutrition Sponsored Athlete and the 2014 Heavyweight Mr. Illinois. Prior to his bodybuilding career, he was a competitive cyclist and crowned Illinois State Champion 7 times. In addition to bodybuilding, he is also the owner of Premier Fitness, a boutique style gym focused on 1-on-1 personal training outside of Chicago, IL. But above all, Daniel's proudest title is being husband to Kandy's 2015 Krush of the Year, Claudia Fijal.

Daniel is available for personal/online training, appearances as well as seminars.

Keep up with Dan:

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THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF YOU:

What to Drive if You Inherit a Country

By Teddy Field



OK, let's say your dictator daddy just died, and he left you with a gazillion dollars, a poorly trained military, and 8.5 million starving subjects. Assuming that the UN is up-to-date on their humanitarian aid, you're going to have a few things to figure out. Among these important issues is what kind of car you'll be driven in. So we here at Kandy Magazine would like to, of course, extend our sincerest condolences, along with a few suggestions for your next state limo...

Mercedes-Maybach S600 Pullman

→ For over half a century, the Mercedes Pullman limo has been striking fear in the hearts of peasants around the globe. Kim Jong iL, "Baby Doc" Duvalier, and Hussein (Saddam, not Barak) have all owned one. And now you can own the latest version, for a mere fraction of your country's GDP.

Based loosely on the new S-Class, the freshly minted Mercedes-Maybach S600 Pullman is nearly 4-feet longer than the long wheelbase S600, and it features 2 forward-facing thrones (reclining, massaging, heated / cooled etc.), with 2 fold-away jumpseats for your minions. There's also a glass divider window between the driver and passenger compartment, to help you avoid that whole War Crimes thing. And Mercedes-Maybach will happily configure the interior in any way that you (or your psychics) can conjure up.



Your driver will be able to quickly hurl you past all of the dissidents, thanks to your Mercedes Big's 530-hp twin-turbo V12. Plus, you can avoid their grenades with Mercedes' Guard armoring package. But here's the thing; the side window frames of the Mercedes-Maybach S600 Pullman are trimmed with more chrome than your drug dealer's Chrysler 300C. And the "Designo" leather interior has more diamond stitching than a 12-pack of Charmin Ultra. So do you really want to look like a drug dealing cartoon bear?

Price tag: The prices for unarmored models start at ● \$566,922 USD



Rolls-Royce Phantom Extended Wheelbase

→ If the Mercedes Pullman rules by intimidation, the Rolls-Royce Phantom EWB takes a more dignified approach. To start, it has all the presence of a rolling bank vault. That upright chrome grille would probably fit on a freightliner, and the Flying Lady hood ornament sits there like a giant middle finger to the masses. You don't have to explain a thing when you arrive in this behemoth. Because you're clearly somebody of great importance.

The Rolls-Royce Phantom Extended Wheelbase has definitely mastered the art of pageantry. But they leave the rest of the details up to you. Want your family crest painted on the doors, and inlaid in the wood trim with semiprecious stones? Done. Want B7 armor plating to protect you from the peasants' tomatoes? Done. Want a single rear throne, upholstered in hand embroidered silk? Done. Short of stitching actual hookers into the headrests, the Rolls Royce Bespoke department can fulfill almost any request.



But if you pull up to a NATO Summit in one of these, everybody's going to know you're skimming from the tax till.

Price tag: The prices for models start at  \$508,800 USD



GoArmored “Money Truck”

→ If you’re the newly christened Supreme Leader of UBallastan, then you need to roll in a Money Truck from a company called GoArmored. These customized armored trucks are the latest fad among celebrities, rappers, and broke reality stars that still want to appear relevant. Because nothing says “Ballin” like an old Brinks Truck full of strippers female entertainment providers.

GoArmored offers two versions of this rather novel transportation solution. The short wheelbase GoArmored Money Truck is based on an actual retired cash truck, and retains all of its body armor and bulletproof glass. You can specify any interior layout that you want, and they have loads of audio-visual, lighting, upholstery, and bar options to choose from. If your motorcade is often filled with lots of high ranking officials, then you might want to step up to the long wheelbase GoArmored Vault 2. This diesel-powered armored truck limo can accommodate up to 24 “cabinet members”, and there’s even a retractable stripper entertainment pole...for those important strategy meetings.

So there you have it: 3 ultra-luxurious rides, fit for a King / President / Supreme Party Leader. If you plan to rule with an iron fist, then you gotta go with the Mercedes S600 Pullman. If your adoring subjects regularly gather to praise the fact that You are their leader, then a Rolls Royce Phantom Extended Wheelbase will provide plenty of room for your ego...and your ornamental sword. But if you want to take a more Gaddafi approach, then your squad of Amazonian “Guards” will just love that retractable entertainment pole in the GoArmored Money Truck.

Good luck, your Excellency!

GO ARMORED

A blonde woman with long hair, wearing a white bikini top and white bikini bottoms, is pushing a purple lawnmower. She is standing in a field of tall grass and pink flowers. In the background, there is a white gazebo and a house with a purple roof. The woman is looking down at the lawnmower. She is wearing black wristbands and black and white striped socks. The lawnmower is purple and silver.

Blonde hair, blue eyed beauty Ramona Bernhard of Munich, Germany only had to ask us once if we would share her gorgeousness with the readers of Kandy. How better to share such a statuesque knock out than with a lovely mow of the lawn, wearing practically next to nothing and heels.

LET'S GO MOW A LAWN

RAMONA BERNHARD

Kandy Style

PHOTOS BY OLIVER BURGHART

RAMONA'S STATS

Age: 26

Hometown: Munich, Germany

Measurements: 37 24 36

Height: 5'9

Weight: 121 lbs

Hair: Blonde

Eyes: Blue



“ Hey guys. I may need a hand with this. Pay attention

As this is our first stop for the World of Kandy train in Germany we are relying on Ramona to provide some insight into Deutschland.

Ramona, we noticed you were Miss Tourism Germany 14. What is that?

It is like Miss America in the USA but it is for tourism. So, I am the face of German tourism.

As the face of German tourism, which German city would you recommend for Americans with the best nightlife?

Oh, we have a lot top nightlife cities, Berlin or Munich but my favorite is Stuttgart. They have a 2-mile long street, full of clubs and bars and event locations so you can party the whole night ... it's very Mediterranean.

Where is the best vacation spot in Germany?

For sure, the Alps in Bavaria. You have everything there - lakes, mountain, sun, snow, perfect food and a lot of culture. Alternatively, most people don't know that Germany has a nice coast ...

What do you love most about Germany?

The freedom. The culture. The cars. The lifestyle. The food.

Let's find out a little about the German culture. Who is the sexiest German ever?

Oh, I think our sexiest export is Heidi Klum. But do you know that Bruce Willis, Sandra Bullock and many more were born in Germany. Also, Leonardo di Caprio, Claudia Schiffer and so on.

Here we thought they all were Americans. Well, except for Heidi. What do you love most about America?

The sexiness. The freedom. My relatives live there. Las Vegas.

Vegas you say?! Hmm. Do you have a wild Las Vegas story?

I partied in the Playboy club at the Palms. I never will forget that night. It ends in a party 1 day later in the Valley of Fire without any sleep.



“ It’s a whole easier pulling than pushing. What do you think guys?”

“ You know ... this is a lot more work than I thought.



“ How about I just
sit here for a bit.

















Cooties

Genre: Horror - Comedy

Cast: Elijah Wood, Rainn Wilson, Alison Pill, Jack McBrayer, Leigh Whannell, Nasim Pedrad
Directed by: Jonathan Milott & Cary Murnion

Rated: R

Studio: Lionsgate

U.S. Release Date: September 18th, 2015

Kandy Rating: 4 out of 5 Cooties

Stop, for a second and think what your first impression was when you heard the name of the movie was Cooties. If you were like us, you figured it was some PG or PG-13 child romance film about young kids and their first crush. Well, you would have been slightly right. The film is partially about young kids except in this film a cafeteria food virus turns the elementary school children into little killer savages.

The germ of the idea for a film called Cooties came to producer Josh C. Waller while chatting with his young niece about imaginary schoolyard contagion. The conversation immediately inspired Waller to picture a horror scenario in which an industrial-strength “cooties” epidemic turns pre-pubescent children into feral predators. If you could imagine Saw meets Glee then you would be on the right track. Rainn Wilson provides the comedy quotient and the schoolyard brats bring the gore.

Cooties’ network television veteran cast pulls off a hilarious horror movie filmed over a tight 25-day shooting schedule at Los Angeles’s Dorris Place Elementary School. We rarely recommend movies for date nights but this is one movie we feel safe in saying will provide an enjoyable couple hours of entertainment surrounded by a couple hundred strangers.

BLACK MASS

Genre: Drama

Cast: Johnny Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch, Dakota Johnson, Kevin Bacon, Joel Edgerton, Juno Temple, Rory Cochrane, Jesse Plemons

Directed by: Scott Cooper

Studio: Warner Bros. Pictures

U.S. Release Date: September 18, 2015



In 1970s South Boston, FBI Agent John Connolly persuades Irish mobster Jimmy Bulger to collaborate with the FBI in order to eliminate their common enemy: the Italian mob. The drama tells the story of this unholy alliance, which spiraled out of control, allowing Whitey to evade law enforcement while consolidating his power and becoming one of the most ruthless and dangerous gangsters in Boston history.



SICARIO

Genre: Drama, Action

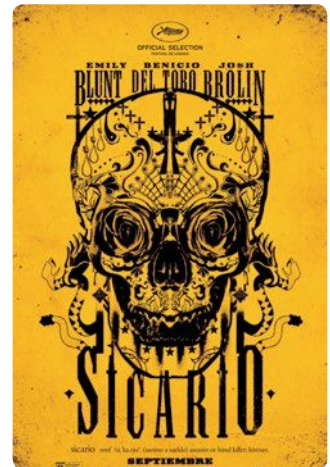
Cast: Emily Blunt, Benicio Del Toro, Josh Brolin, Victor Garber, Jon Bernthal

Directed by: Denis Villeneuve

Rating: R

Studio: Lionsgate

U.S. Release Date: September 18, 2015



In Mexico, SICARIO means hitman.

When Arizona FBI agent and kidnap-response-team leader Kate Macer uncovers a Mexican cartel's house of death, her shocking find leads to profound consequences on both a personal and global level. Kate is recruited to join a covert black-ops mission headed by a mysterious Colombian operative known only as Alejandro along with special agent Matt Graver. Even as Kate tries to convince herself she's on a hunt for justice, she is thrust into the dark heart of a secret battleground that has swept up ruthless cartels, kill-crazy assassins, clandestine American spies and thousands of innocents.

The jagged line of the U.S. and Mexican border is now awash in some of the most pressing questions of our times – drugs, terror, illegal immigration, corruption and an escalating swath of dark crime that has left people on both sides frightened and vigilant. Sicario explores the journey of an intelligence operation that pushes the rules to engage with those who don't play by any.



EVEREST



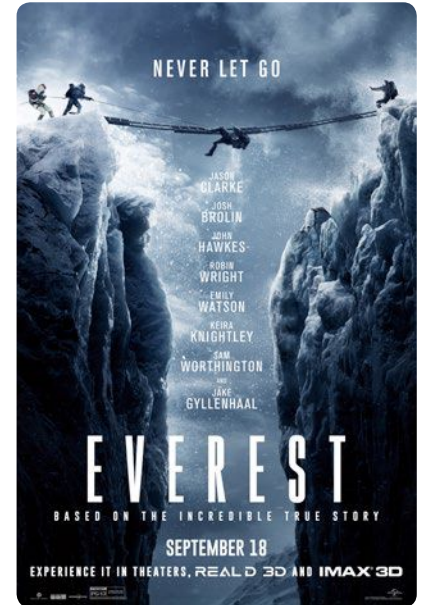
Genre: Epic Adventure

Cast: Jason Clarke, Josh Brolin, John Hawkes, Robin Wright, Michael Kelly, Sam Worthington, Keira Knightley, Emily Watson and Jake Gyllenhaal

Directed by: Baltasar Kormákur

Studio: Universal Pictures

Inspired by the incredible events surrounding an attempt to reach the summit of the world's highest mountain, Everest documents the awe-inspiring journey of two different expeditions challenged beyond their limits by one of the fiercest snowstorms ever encountered by mankind. Their mettle tested by the harshest elements found on the planet, the climbers will face nearly impossible obstacles as a lifelong obsession becomes a breathtaking struggle for survival.



THE TRANSPORTER REFUELED



Genre: Action

Cast: Ed Skrein, Ray Stevenson, Gabriella Wright

Directed by: Camille Delamarre

Studio: EuropaCorp

Frank Martin is living a less perilous lifestyle, or so he thinks, transporting classified packages for questionable people. Things take a turn for the worse when a cunning femme fatale and her three seductive sidekicks orchestrate the bank heist of the century. The former special-operations mercenary must now use his covert expertise and superior driving skills to outrun a sinister Russian kingpin, who is the subject of revenge from the team of gorgeous women.



Photos by
Charlie Suriano
HMU by
Shannon Palmer

You could call her one of Australia's OGG, Original Glamour Girls. She has graced the cover of the most popular Australian men's magazines, past and present. She even sexed up the pages of Kandy in our October 2013 issue. Now, she is back with her very first Kandy cover. Join us in welcoming back Emma Brown!


KANDY COVER MODEL

EMMA BROWN

★★★ FIT, SEXY & SANDY ★★★





Emma, first off. Welcome back to Kandy.

Hi Kandy Lovers! Firstly, thank you for having me. I'm so glad to be here!

When you first appeared back in Kandy in October 2013 you were transitioning into fitness modeling. What's the latest?

The latest with my fitness modeling is I won my recent ANB Show representing Shredded Strength Institute so that was absolutely amazing! I'm having a break at the moment enjoying training for myself and just loving life. I am looking forward to a couple of fitness shoots coming up and I will be helping out backstage at the next ANB Show.

What do you enjoy most about fitness modeling?

I enjoy the way you watch your body change, slowly adding lean muscle and curves where you want them. :) I enjoy being coached through training programs that you don't even think you're going to be able to do! I enjoy helping others. I am so looking forward to completing my studies so I can start work as a personal trainer. I guess I enjoy all of it!

What do you enjoy least?

Occasionally I am guilty of not being balanced. I guess that would be the thing I would change. There's not really much I don't enjoy!

What is the biggest lifestyle change you have made for fitness modeling?

Well, when I started I was a complete novice, never trained or followed a nutrition plan so pretty much everything changes. You need to pay attention to every aspect if you want to get the best results which I did. The nutrition would have been the biggest change, followed closely by a training regimen which becomes increasingly challenging as you get better. :) I am so happy with the changes I have made and the lifestyle I have now. :) I would definitely recommend healthy lifestyle changes.

What keeps you motivated?

HaHa Results! Or aiming for results. :) It's something you can constantly work on; there's always room for improvement so it's easy to stay motivated. I love having new programs I find that are very motivating.

What milestones have you set or accomplished?

As I said, I have won two ANB Shows which have been awesome achievements, that's definitely something I'm very proud of. :) Becoming a sponsored athlete and being able to represent my Institute up on stage. Shooting for Oxygen Magazine was also an absolutely amazing experience. There are so many great things in this industry.

What are some training tips for someone who's the beer drinking couch potato?

Honestly, I wouldn't give them tips unless they asked me too. I don't judge people who are different to me but if they did ask me too I would definitely be there to help them and provide some tips! Obviously, the first one would be less beer and couch! haha

What would you say are some of the biggest mistakes people make when they first start training?

This is a really good question. I was really lucky as I got myself one of the world's best coaches so I have been very well trained by her. So my answer would be ... they don't learn technique and they don't warm up; they try to go too heavy too fast and they don't really know their bodies. I would suggest getting yourself a great coach who will train you and look after your well-being. And, also realize that training is only part of being leaner and stronger - your nutrition is what will make the difference!

What are your favorite cheat meals and foods?

Mine aren't really cheats they are more treats. Maybe on a Sunday night I'm a sucker for pizza and then ice-cream. mmm haha

Who is an inspirational person to you?

My Coach Kelly. Ever since I started at Shredded Strength Institute I knew she was someone I really admired. Now five years later, she is still my inspiration.



“... it's all a little bit funny, now I think about it.”

What is the funniest moment you witnessed at a competition?

Actually everyone is so dehydrated, excited, nervous, pumping up and trying to perfect the tan!! Running around half naked!! Several funny things happen but none really stand out as the funniest. I guess it's all a little bit funny, now I think about it. :)

Odds and Ends

My ride of choice is ... I have always loved V8's.

My favorite travel spot is ... Bali. Double Six Hotel Actually Absolutely Breathtaking.

My favorite cheat beverage is ... I'm a non-drinker so it would have to be ... milkshakes!!

What I love about Australia is ... Everything. How can you not this is just the most beautiful country. I will never live anywhere else.

What I love about America is ... The opportunities, The people, The differences. I loved America and I'm so excited to come back and see you again! America is absolutely beautiful.

The last concert I went to was ... Linkin Park.

My favorite article of clothing is ... My Adidas tracksuit! I'm wearing it now. :)

My best first date was ... My best first date never ended.

3 things a guy should never say to a woman ... I told you so. I'm not hungry. I can't lift that. hahahaha

1 thing a guy should tell his girl every day ... I think showing it is more important. Showing she is loved.

List the first 3 items you see in your purse - Perfume, Money, Phone

If we were to pop your car trunk what would we find? Nothing. Also Clean :) Just the spare.

Follow Emma Online

Instagram :

[@emma_brown_online](#)

Facebook :

www.facebook.com/EmmaBrownModel

“ I have always loved V8's.





“ ... it would have to be
... milkshakes!!





KANDY COVER MODEL

KANDY MAGAZINE



“*My best first date never ended.*”



KANDY COVER MODEL

KANDY MAGAZINE



“ ... this is just the most beautiful country.



KANDY COVER MODEL

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KANDY COVER MODEL

KANDY MAGAZINE





MADDEN NFL 16



PLAY VIDEO



Features of Note

Draft Champions - draft a fantasy team of modern NFL superstars and classic legends and put them on the field in this new way to play. Create a team by selecting players over a series of quick rounds, then compete against either human or AI opponents in single-player or head-to-head events. Once you've completed an event, it's time to head back to the war room and draft a new team of playmakers.

Kandy Grade on Feature: C+

Multiplayer Catch - a new set of tools for both sides of the ball. You will be able to experience true two-player catch interactions as offensive and defensive players. Receivers and defenders now dictate the outcome of each passing play while the ball is in the air. They added more than 400 new multi-player catch outcomes, which includes knockouts, tip ball, simultaneous possession catches, offensive/defensive PI, interceptions and more. The system also accounts for double coverage situations. For receivers, go for the "aggressive" catch, pick up extra yards with "run after catch," or move the chains with the "possession" catch. On defense, disrupt the outcome of each play using the new "play ball" and "hit receiver" mechanics.

Kandy Grade on Feature: A

Catching Mechanic - there are now 3 different catching types to choose from - run after catch (ala Jerry Rice), possession (do your best Larry Fitzgerald impersonation), and aggressive catch (go up and get that pigskin ala "Megatron" Calvin Johnson).

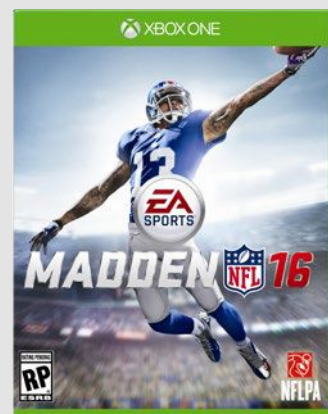
Kandy Grade on Feature: B

Body-relative throws - quarterbacks can now place the ball where only their receiver can get it. Touch passing has come to Madden.

Kandy Grade on Feature: A

Kandy Verdict

Do you upgrade? We say go for it. These new features put you more in control of the outcome of the game.



On Sale: Now
Rated: E
Genre: Sports
Platform: PS 4, PS 3, Xbox One, XBOX 360
Publisher: Electronic Arts





PLAY VIDEO



NHL 16



Features of Note

Be a Pro: Shape Your Legacy – The way you play dictates the type of player you will become in an all-new Be a Pro progression system. On-ice actions directly influence attributes earned, ensuring that your Pro will reflect the way you play. Very cool feature unless you are a novice in which case expect to get your arse handed to you every time you strap on the skates.

Visual On-Ice Trainer – ideal for those novices out there. This new training tool will help sharpen your offensive and defensive skills no matter your pathetic talent level. Visual aids project shooting targets, passing lanes, open teammates, and more. Our suggestion – put in hours of, in the words of Allen Iverson, **PRACTICE** before you progress into game mode.

Online Couch Co-op – you followed our advice and put in the hours of practice. Now, strap on the skates and engage in the online couch co-op where you and your friends gather on the couch and play some drop-in hockey online. If this existed back in the day, Gretzky's head never would have bled in Swingers.



Features We Could Do Without

Playoff Beards – Really? Really! Not necessary. Our face itches just thinking about it. Way too much thought went into this with representations of beard patterns, length, thickness, and growth rates for individual players.

Be a GM: Player Morale – This is just over the top, as if our lives aren't stressful enough with work, talking smack against other players and carving aside time from our girlfriend's demands. Now EA has us dealing with player personalities that we have to manage. Not interested in dealing with trade demands, teammate relationships, and calling team meetings. Where is the off button so we make sure we never turn this mode on.

Story Driven Commentary – Hey, we love Doc! But, we can only take him in small doses. Eventually, the guy is going to drive us nuts. So, while Doc Emrick, Eddie Olczyk, and Ray Ferraro are back calling the game we're not so sure we are looking forward to the expanded coverage of on-ice stories and big plays through this story driven commentary.

Kandy Verdict

Do you upgrade? We recommend the upgrade. They've introduced a few other updates to the game we haven't covered but definitely immerse you more into the game.



On Sale: September 16th
Rated: E
Genre: Sports
Platform: Xbox One & PS 4
Publisher: Electronic Arts

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MAD MAX



Features of Note

➤ Mad Max delivers open world gameplay in a post-apocalyptic setting where cars are the key to survival. Fight to stay alive in The Wasteland, using on-ground and vehicular combat against savage gangs of bandits marauders led by the warlord, Scabrous Scrotus. Can you leave the madness behind and find solace in the storied “Plains of Silence”?

Build the Ultimate Car

- Without your Interceptor, you are nothing. Embark on a dangerous journey to rebuild your key to salvation
- Brutalize your enemies in high-speed, inter-vehicular warfare using the ultimate combat vehicle
- Build your perfect war-machine with thousands of mods to customize performance, armor and weaponry

Be the Legendary Post-apocalyptic Warrior

- Build your legend by upgrading Max's stats, gear, and abilities
- Raid enemy encampments to gain access to precious resources and powerful upgrades
- Kill or be killed by combining stealth, gun, and melee combat to take out your relentless enemies

Tame the primal Wasteland

- Traverse and discover a haunting post-apocalyptic world with dynamic weather, treacherous landscapes, and sadistic marauder factions that create threatening situations around every corner
- Freedom to do whatever you want, whenever you want. The Wasteland is vast and filled with dangerous side missions, activities and encounters ranging from ambushes to hijacking fuel caravans

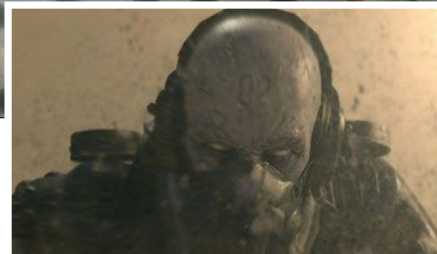
Kandy Verdict

The game is all about survival. The on-screen graphics are mind-blowing. If you are willing to give hours and hours to a game each day then pick this gem up.



On Sale: September 1st
Rated: M for Mature
Genre: Open World / 3rd Person Action
Platform: Xbox One, PS 4
Publisher: WB Games





Kojima Productions continues forth the 'METAL GEAR SOLID V Experience' with the latest chapter, METAL GEAR SOLID V: The Phantom Pain.

Ushering in a new era for the franchise The Phantom Pain provides players tactical freedom to carry out open-world missions. Taking place nine years after the events of MGSV: Ground Zeroes and the fall of Mother Base, Snake a.k.a. Big Boss, awakes from a nine year coma. The game resumes the story in 1984, with the Cold War still as the backdrop, which continues to shape a global crisis. Snake's journey takes him into a world where he is driven by a need for revenge and the pursuit of a shadow group, XOF.

Key Features:

Open-World game design allows players the ultimate freedom on how to approach missions and overall game progression.

The Fox Engine delivers photorealistic graphics, thoughtful game design and new-generation game production quality.

Online connectivity carries the experience beyond the consoles to other devices to augment the overall functionality and access to the game.

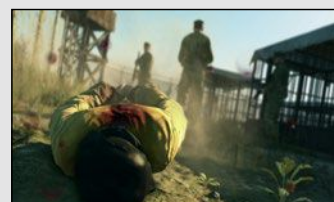
New online multiplayer - METAL GEAR SOLID ONLINE. You have to offer a multiplayer online ability these days, especially in tactical, combat games.

Kandy Verdict

If having to choose between Mad Max and Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain we would opt for Mad Max. However, if your discretionary income allows you the ability to not have to choose, then by all means throw some bones at this game.



On Sale: September 1st
Rated: M for Mature
Genre: Tactical Espionage Operations
Platform: PS 4, PS 3, Xbox One, Xbox 360, Steam
Publisher: Konami Digital



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Brittany has been on our radar for a long time. And, with the assistance of our mutual friend and photographer – Aaron Riveroll – we are finally able to bring her sultry looks to the pages of Kandy. Prepare yourself to get lost in Brittany's World.

SEPTEMBER 2015 KRUSH OF THE MONTH

Brittany
DANYELLE

BRITTANY'S WORLD

PHOTOS BY: AARON RIVEROLL

She lists her occupation as a YouTuber. She doesn't own a purse. She says she feels safest when driving her own car and the inside of her car is clean, but if you were to pop the car trunk you would find blankets she gets from American Airlines ... *"I pass them out to people sleeping outside in LA."*




What she loves most about LA is the entertainment industry and what she loves least is what we all dislike, the Traffic. The last movie she saw was ***Straight Outta Compton*** and the last concert she went to was Florida Georgia Line, Anything Goes Tour 2015. Her favorite actress is Kerri Washington and the biggest star she has met is Blake Griffin. When the conversation turns to sports her favorite team is the "*Philadelphia Eagles ... bleed green all day!*" And, if you wondering where she might be taking in the Eagles games this fall, "*The Parlour has nice size of Eagles' fans there.*"



Brittany reminds us that when in relationships there are 3 things you should never say to a woman, "*I'm prettier than you,*" "*I know what you like,*" and "*Can you buy this for me?*" But, always remember, every day before you walk out that door, to let her know that "*You're going to make things happen.*"







She says she has yet to experience her best first date. Her favorite restaurant is STK and her favorite meal is Oysters. And, no surprise, the ideal date night ... “*Anything involving oysters.*” So, guys let us help you connect the dots – STK, Oysters, and the remaining dots ... turn to her Kandy ingredients.



KRUSH OF THE MONTH

KANDY MAGAZINE



KRUSH OF THE MONTH

KANDY MAGAZINE





Kandy Krush Ingredients

Name: Brittany Danyelle
Birthday: May 25th
Measurements: 34-25-36
Height: 5'5
Weight: 117lbs
Hair: Brown
Eyes: Black

Social Media: Instagram: @brittanydanyelle0
 Twitter: @brit_danyelle
 SnapChat: @brit_danyelle

My favorite article of clothing is ... A long tee.

I first kissed a boy when I was ... 5.

My first school girl crush was ... I can't remember if I ever had one.

My perfect man ... Is honest, reliable, open-minded, and has nice calves.

If we were to ask your best friend about your taste in men, what would she say? Tall

Favorite Color ... Gray and Taupe

Favorite Song ... Sippin' On Fire

Vegas or LA? LA...all my friends are here.

Beyonce' or Taylor Swift? Beyoncé

My favorite athlete is ... Myself.

My favorite travel spot is ... Rep blica Dominicana.

I like it when ... I make my tea just right.



TAILGATERS MAIN COURSE

SOUTHWESTERN PORK



→ We've tried various renditions of this main course over the decades of our lives. Nothing, and we mean nothing, comes close to this recipe. Our number one recipe for southwestern pork is procured from a family with New Mexico heritage so you know it is authentic and, more importantly, tasty.

Warning: it takes time to prepare but it is well worth it and guaranteed to have all the single ladies swooning over your culinary skills.

Ingredients

Picnic Pork Roast – 5 to 6 lbs
 8 to 10 chili peppers (dried)
 Cumin
 Oregano
 Garlic Salt
 Liquid Smoke
 Tortillas, Cornbread or Biscuits

How to prepare the Pork Roast:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Place the pork picnic roast on a meat rack in a dutch oven. Sprinkle with a tablespoon each of garlic salt, cumin, and oregano. Shake liquid smoke on meat until the surface of the pork is well covered. Add enough water to pan so there is anywhere from a quarter to half inch of water, but no more.

Cover and bake for one hour then immediately reduce the oven temperature to 275 degrees and continue cooking for six hours.

Remove the pork from oven, let it cool for 15 to 20 minutes, and then begin removing the meat from the bone and shred. Place the shredded pork into a crockpot.

How to prepare the Red Chili Sauce:

Remove the stems and most of the seeds from the peppers. Place the dried peppers in a sauce pan and cover with water. Boil the peppers until they soften. Pour the peppers and water into a blender, add 2 tablespoons of cumin and 1 tablespoon of oregano and liquify the mixture.

CONTROL THE HEAT: *The more seeds the HOTTER the pork.*

Pour the red chili sauce over the pork in the crockpot and stir together. Set the temperature on the crockpot at its highest setting and monitor. Once the pork begins to boil reduce the temperature to low or medium, whichever will provide a simmer. The longer you simmer, the better the taste. We recommend keeping the setting at low and allowing a long, slow simmer.

Serve with your favorite carb - corn or flour tortillas, cornbread or biscuits. This pork is so good that it tastes great mixed with any of the above.

BEST TAILGATERS BEER - GLUTEN FREE

O MISSION BEER



→ Hold that gluten. 2015 is the year of gluten-free. Well, real men are not concerned about their gluten intake but it doesn't hurt to cut gluten when you can, as long as you don't have to sacrifice taste.

Omission Pale Ale

Brewer: Widmer Brothers Brewing

Malts: Pale, Caramel, Honey, & Hallertau

Hops: Cascade

Abv: 5.8%

Nice, smooth, no aftertaste beer. Amber in color, Omission Pale Ale's floral aroma is complimented by caramel malt body. If you bring a six-pack to your tailgate make sure you pop one for yourself upon arrival. Once you turn your back the remaining five will have disappeared.

What We Left Out

We were going to list several gluten-free beers but after tasting a few the only beer we could agree on is Omissions. We also recommend Omission's gluten-free Lager.

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**AARYN
JANSEN**

Hometown: Redwood Falls, MN

Birthday: 5-6-90

Measurments: 34-25-37

Height: 5' 5"

Weight: 125 lbs

Eyes Color: Blue

Hair Color: Blonde

I'm a huge football fan. Tight pants and bbq smokies? Sign me up! This year my money is on 49ers, that's my team!







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**ANDREA
ERIN**

Hometown: Lake Mathews, CA

Birthday: 5-19-89

Measurements: 34-26-34

Height: 5' 7"

Weight: 125 lbs

Eyes Color: Brown

Hair Color: Green

I am a HUGE football fan! I am originally from the Boston area so naturally I am a New England Patriots fanatic. No Brady bandwagon here, its in my blood! ... I love the rivalries, the anticipation of every play, and the pride you feel when your favorite team wins which as a Pats fan, is all the time!















BEST TAILGATING APPS - TRAFFIC



App: Waze

Publisher: Waze Inc.

Size: 60.4 MB

Price: Free



Why you should download

We've all been there. Sitting in a long line of cars on the freeway exit ramp to the stadium, counting the precious minutes ticking away into our pre-game beer guzzling, brat devouring ritual. With the Waze app you can now trim back those precious minutes lost because you either procrastinated getting on the road or, more likely, you sat around waiting for your girl to finish her own pre-game ritual, making sure she had the perfect pair of shoes to match her jersey. But, hey she looks good so you don't say a word.

Our Favorite Features:

- ▶ See your friends' ETA so you know if their girl has them running late too
- ▶ Send your ETA & real-time drive to your buddy, but remember don't text and drive
- ▶ Live routing based on community driven, real-time traffic & road info
- ▶ Live maps, consistently edited and updated by Waze community map editors
- ▶ Automatic rerouting as conditions change on the road

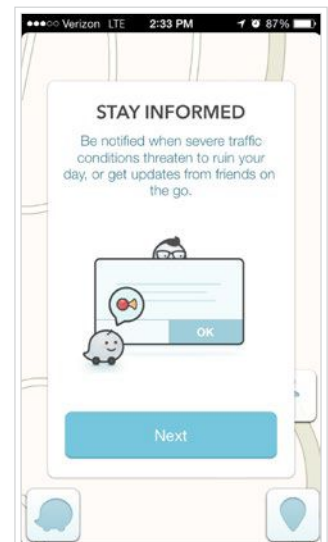
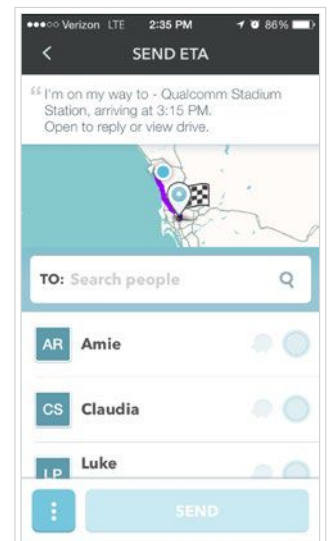
Drawbacks:

- ▶ Large file initial app download – 60 MB on your iPhone but that should be no problem for your 4G network; Android app varies depending on device
- ▶ As with any GPS app, continued use with it running in the background will dramatically decrease battery life

Value Added Bonus:

We've already established the fact that you left late. So, what do you do to make up for lost time? You speed. Well, Waze has a solution for that too as well as other unexpected travel delays.

- ▶ Community reported alerts including accidents, hazards, police traps, road closures, and more



BEST TAILGATING APPS - SOCIAL NETWORKING



App: Find My Friends

Publisher: Apple

Size: 6.1 MB

Price: Free



Why you should download

So, you've arrived early and decide to get some tailgating in. The problem is you decided the morning of the game to go. You scalped some tickets, no biggie. But now what? Use Find My Friends to see if any of your iPhone buddies are tailgating. Oh, and the great thing about it, it's already preloaded on your iPhone, that is unless you removed it.

Our Favorite Features:

- ▶ Location-based alerts that can notify you automatically when a friend arrives at the stadium
- ▶ Set up alerts to notify friends about changes in your location, moving from lot G3 to H5

Drawbacks:

- ▶ Friends have to have had accepted an invitation to be seen on your network

Value Added Bonus:

You can hide your location with a single switch so that chick repellent buddy of yours from college can't track you down and kill whatever game you got going on with the ladies.

BEST TAILGATING APPS - TICKETS

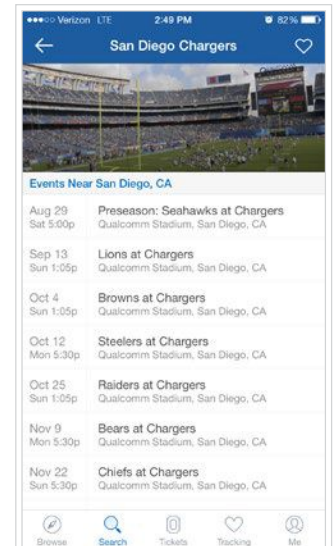
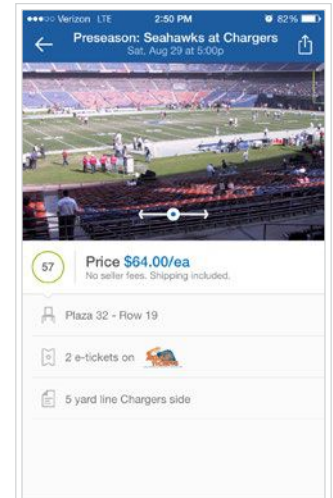
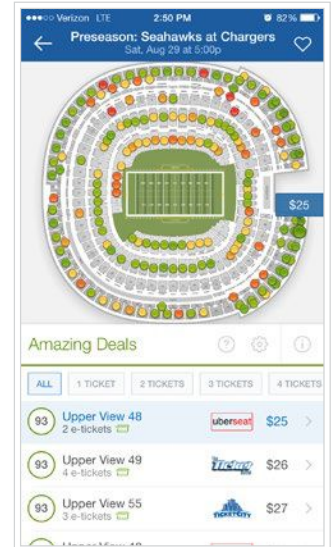


App: SeatGeek

Publisher: SeatGeek Inc.

Size: 29.7 MB

Price: Free



Why you should download

Simply put, it saves you money if you are willing to put in the few extra minutes to search for the best price. Since it does not pull tickets from a single site, you are viewing the widest selection so it may take time to find the best seat at the best price.

Our Favorite Features:

- ▶ Tickets from 100's of sites, not a single site
- ▶ Seat views of the field
- ▶ Wide selection means competitive pricing

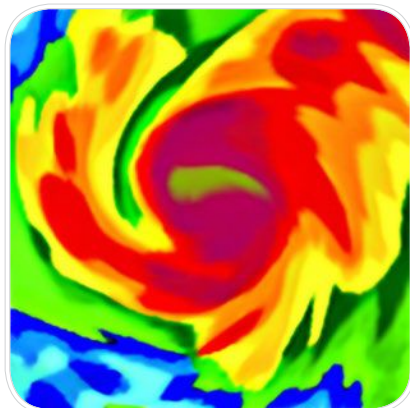
Drawbacks:

- ▶ Extra time you may spend reviewing the ticket options

Value Added Bonus:

We haven't experienced this first-hand but we've heard that you can purchase tickets last minute, up to kick-off. So, if you've arrived at the game without tickets in hand or have a couple spare tickets because your buddy and his girl stood you up, here is a last minute alternative to scalpers.

BEST TAILGATING APPS - WEATHER



App: NOAA Weather Radar

Publisher: Apalon Apps

Size: 45.9 MB

Price: Free iTunes,

\$2.99 Google Play



Why you should download

The app automatically updates you on weather in your current location as you travel and arrive at the game.

Features:

- ▶ Live doppler radars
- ▶ National weather forecast
- ▶ Maps

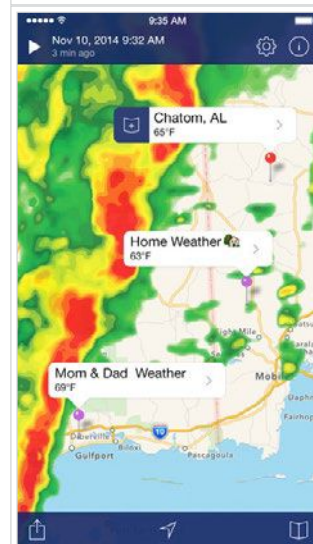
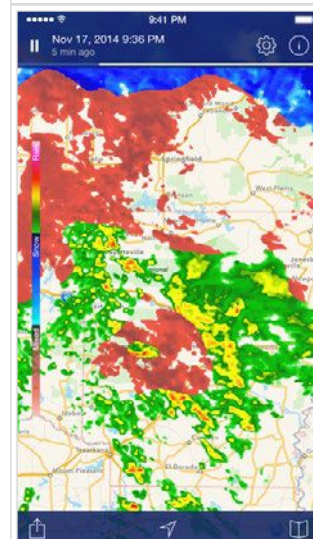
Drawbacks:

- ▶ Large file initial app download – nearly 50 MB on your iPhone but that should be no problem for your 4G network; Android app is only 3 MB
- ▶ iOS App Users - be prepared for constant ads but what do you expect for free.

Value Added Bonus:

If you are travelling abroad or you are one of our half-million international app users, they have coverage in the following markets:

- ▶ Australia, Japan, United Kingdom, Ireland, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Germany, Switzerland, Italy (western), Denmark (southeast), Poland (western), Czech Republic, Austria (northwestern).
- ▶ App has been translated into French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Turkish



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WORLD OF KANDY AUSTRALIA
KAYLEIGH DOUGLAS

IT DOESN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN THIS
HOT AUSSIE BLONDE WASHING A CONVERTIBLE IN HER BIKINI

PHOTOS BY BODEMODELS.COM

KAYLEIGH'S STATS

Age: 20

Hometown: Brisbane, Australia

Height: 5'7

Weight: 116 lbs

Hair: Blonde

Eyes: Green

We're pretty proud of our knowledge of Australian pop culture. But, when Kayleigh listed her three hottest Aussies we went scrambling to the web to look up these ladies. And, for that, we are now forever grateful.

List your 3 favorite cars

Holden Commodore SS Ute

(Totally Aussie)

Mercedes CLK63

Lamborghini Aventador

Name Your 3 Hottest Aussies

Jennifer Hawkins

Delta Goodrem

Phoebe Tonkin

Tell us one thing about Australian women we may not know

We all fake tan.









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WORLD OF KANDY AUSTRALIA

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WORLD OF KANDY AUSTRALIA
BRITTA LYNN

PHOTOS BY BODEMODELS.COM

BRITTA'S STATS

Age: 26

Hometown: Sydney, Australia

Height: 5'4

Weight: 110 lbs

Hair: Brunette

Eyes: Green

We are not sure what we like more, when we are discovered halfway around the planet by beautiful women or when photographers shooting these beautiful women discover us. This month we welcome a couple new Aussie girls to the pages of Kandy, courtesy of bodemodels.com.

3 Great Things about Australian Women

We are fun, carefree and we love the beach!

3 Favorite Australian Beaches

Balmoral, Shellharbour & Horseshoe Bay in South West Rocks

3 All-time Favorite People

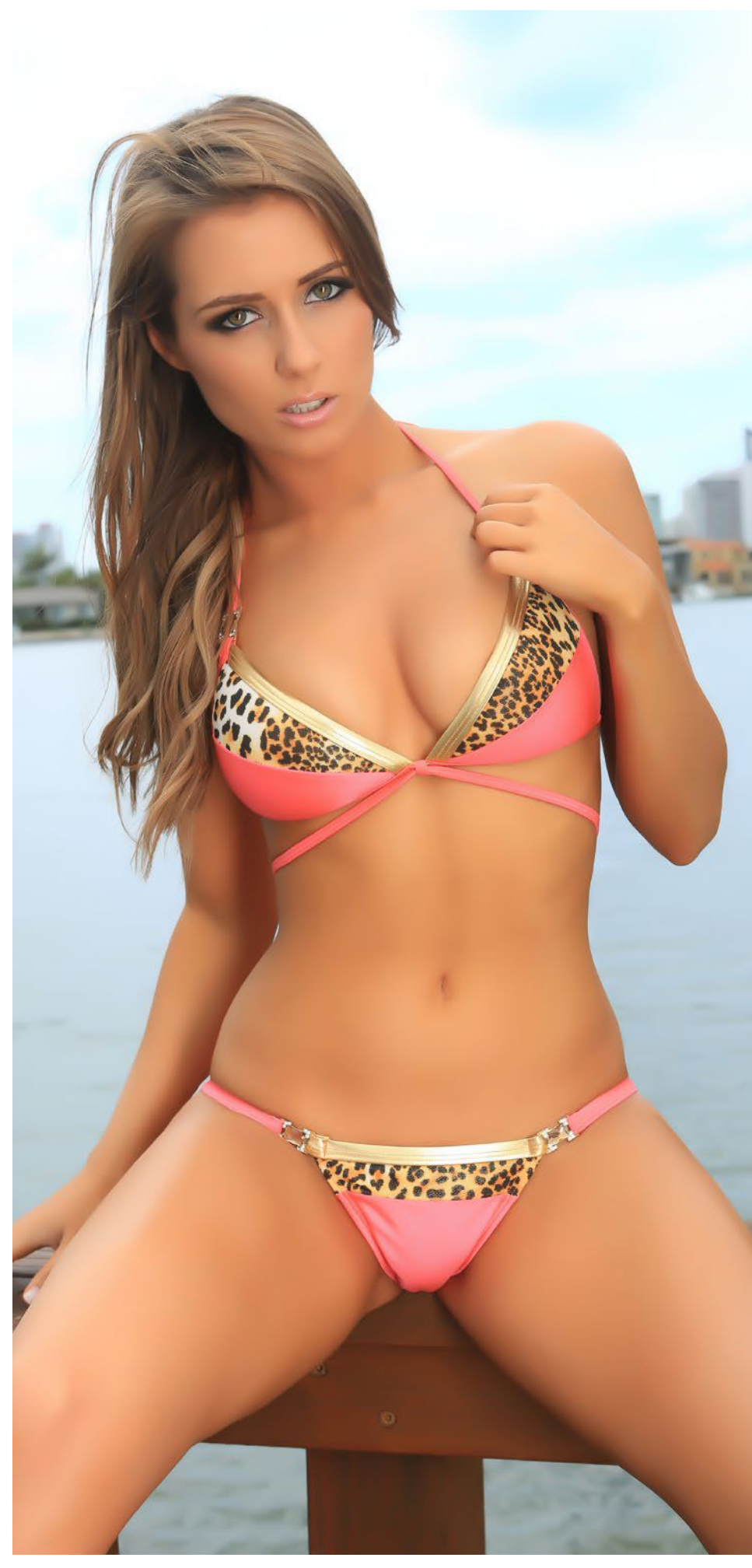
I don't know if I could choose only 3. I just love people who inspire me. At the moment, my fitness inspiration is any curvy woman who manages to stay fit and my career inspiration comes from all the creatives designing innovative and beautiful things. But I think of all the people in my life, my mum is definitely the one who inspires me to stay strong every day, no matter what.

3 Aussie Terms Americans Might Misunderstand and What They Mean

Budgie Smugglers - a very graphic way of describing small underpants, men's swimming trunks

A dog's breakfast - a total mess

Thongs - they go on your feet!









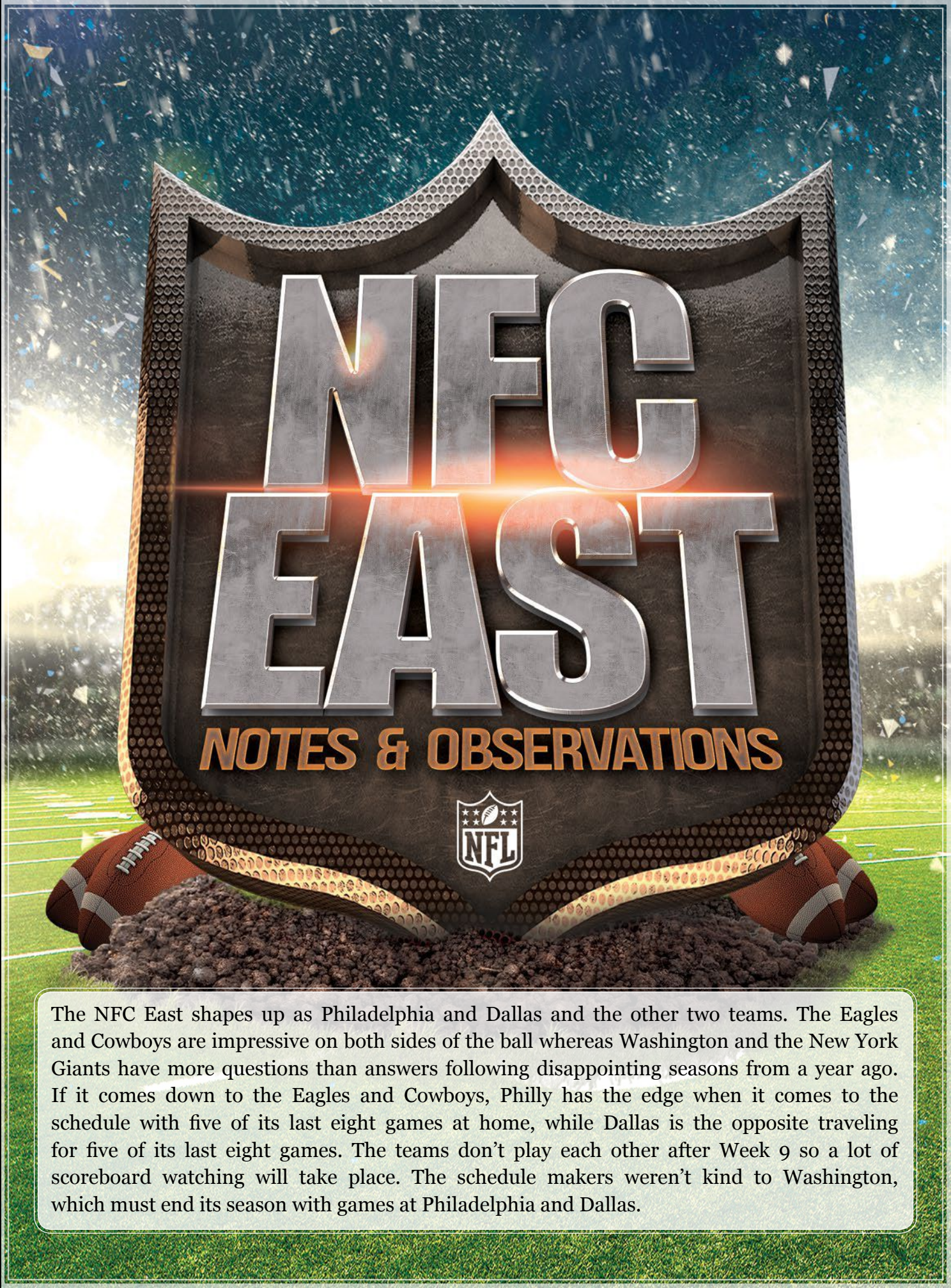


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NFC EAST

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS



The NFC East shapes up as Philadelphia and Dallas and the other two teams. The Eagles and Cowboys are impressive on both sides of the ball whereas Washington and the New York Giants have more questions than answers following disappointing seasons from a year ago. If it comes down to the Eagles and Cowboys, Philly has the edge when it comes to the schedule with five of its last eight games at home, while Dallas is the opposite traveling for five of its last eight games. The teams don't play each other after Week 9 so a lot of scoreboard watching will take place. The schedule makers weren't kind to Washington, which must end its season with games at Philadelphia and Dallas.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC EAST

COWBOYS





DALLAS COWBOYS

Mister Obvious Says

Dallas suffered one of the biggest offseason defections with the league's leading rusher DeMarco Murray going to division rival Philadelphia. The Cowboys are hoping former backup Joseph Randle is ready for a much larger role and that Darren McFadden can resurrect his career after producing only 3.4 yards per carry in his last three seasons with Oakland. Murray's 2,261 yards from scrimmage will be difficult to replace but a running game is a must to alleviate pressure on QB Tony Romo.

Biggest Additions

McFadden comes over from Oakland with some baggage and only a single 1,000-yard rushing season in seven years. Injury prone, he's never played more than 13 games in a season.

Biggest Losses

Murray moving to Philadelphia is a double-whammy for Dallas because he is playing for a team that will challenge the Cowboys for the NFC East title.

Rookie To Watch

OL La'el Collins of LSU is a first-round talent that went undrafted because he was named a person of interest in the death of his former girlfriend. Time will tell if it was worth the risk for Dallas to sign Collins, who figures to bolster an already strong offensive line.

Marquee Match-up

The Week 5 game at home against New England would be the top non-division game on the schedule. The Week 14 game at Green Bay figures to have playoff implications.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 17 at home against the Redskins, who may be playing under an interim head coach by then.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Despite listing it as one of our marquee match-ups, their week 14 game at Green Bay is the last of four out of five games on the road.

Overall thoughts

Dallas' schedule is one of the more difficult ones in the league with games against New England, Seattle and New Orleans in addition to two against division rival Philadelphia. The possibility exists that Dallas could be 3-5 by Week 10 with both games against Philly already played as well as the games against New England, New Orleans and Seattle. Dallas coach Jason Garrett may have to dig the team out of a hole and it won't be easy with the Cowboys playing five of their last eight games on the road.



EAGLES





PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Mister Obvious Says

Fitting that Chip Kelly, he of the no-huddle, fast-paced offense, did not stand pat during the offseason. His moves kept coming. Philadelphia has a new starting quarterback with Sam Bradford acquired in a trade with St. Louis for Nick Foles, two new starting guards, a new starting running back (a big one in DeMarco Murray after LeSean McCoy was dealt to Buffalo) and new starting cornerbacks and at least one new starting linebacker.

Biggest Additions

Out of many significant additions, Bradford and Murray stand out the most. The former Oklahoma teammates should thrive in Kelly's offense as long as Bradford remains healthy. Ryan Mathews, a two-time 1,000-yard rusher with San Diego, also must stay away from his injury-filled past to give defenses fits going against him and Murray.

Biggest Losses

Foles and McCoy were traded away so Kelly does not see them as losses but as bargaining chips to make his team better. WR Jeremy Maclin signed as a free agent with Kansas City but Kelly is hoping veteran Miles Austin, twice a 1,000-yard receiver with Dallas before going to Cleveland last year, will be an adequate replacement along with rookie WR Nelson Agholor.

Rookie To Watch

Agholor was one of the best receivers in the nation last year for USC finishing in the top 10 in receptions (seventh), yards (ninth) and touchdowns (tied for seventh).

Marquee Match-up

The Week 9 game at Dallas on a Sunday night marks the return of Murray. In Philly's favor, its bye week precedes this matchup while Dallas must host Seattle the previous week.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 16 at home against Washington.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 13 at New England in another Sunday night affair.

Overall thoughts

Everybody talks about Kelly's offense, which deflects attention away from Philly's defense. The Eagles ranked 32nd and 31st in pass defense the last two years, which prompted the Eagles to sign free agent cornerback Byron Maxwell away from Seattle. They also received aggressive LB Kiko Alonso in the trade with Buffalo for McCoy. An improving defense matched with the fireworks of the Eagles' offense could equate to at least a 12-win season.



GIANTS





NEW YORK GIANTS

Mister Obvious Says

This could be the end of the Tom Coughlin's 12 years with the Giants if New York does not advance to the playoffs. The two-time Super Bowl champion coach has not advanced to the playoffs in the last three years a declining record each season, 9-7 in 2012, 7-9 in 2013 and 6-10 in 2014. Even if New York surprises and overcomes tough division rivals Dallas and Philadelphia, he may decide it's time to leave. He certainly has earned the right to leave on his own terms.

Biggest Additions

Hard-running RB Shane Vereen from New England is an essential addition for QB Eli Manning inasmuch as he is productive catching the ball out of the backfield.

Biggest Losses

Sadly, it could be DE Jason Pierre-Paul (12.5 sacks last year) who severely injured his right hand in a July 4 fireworks mishap that resulted in the amputation of his right index finger.

Rookie To Watch

Third-round pick Owa Odighizuwa, a defensive end, will be counted on to help make up for the absence of Pierre-Paul but his strength is stopping the run, not rushing the passer. Landon Collins, a safety out of Nick Saban's pro-style defense at Alabama, is lauded as an instant impact player.

Marquee Match-up

The Giants have defeated New England twice in the Super Bowl over the last nine seasons and the teams square off again in Week 10 at New York.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 5 at home in a Sunday night game against a 49ers team that figures to struggle, especially early in the season under a new regime.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 8 at New Orleans after playing Philadelphia and Dallas the previous two weeks, New York's toughest stretch of the season.

Overall thoughts

The defense figures to give Coughlin most of his headaches without a consistent pass rusher, unless Pierre-Paul is cleared to play. Defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo provides promise, returning after coaching New York's defense in its heyday in 2007 and 2008 with Justin Tuck and Michael Strahan. The offense may be one of the best in the league with Manning, Odell Beckham Jr. and fellow wide out Victor Cruz returning after missing last season due to injury. New York plays four of its first six games in prime time.



REDSKINS





WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Mister Obvious Says

When hearing the name Robert Griffin III, the immediate thought is about his injuries and not about his talent. That sad saga appears to continue this year with RGIII already leaving a preseason game against Detroit early because of a concussion and shoulder stinger. Second-year coach Jay Gruden cannot afford to have Griffin's injuries dominate the headlines once again this season. That will spell trouble not only for Washington but for Gruden's future.

Biggest Additions

OT Brandon Scherff was drafted as the No. 5 pick overall for a reason, to improve Griffin's pass protection and improve Washington's running game. Washington's porous pass defense should receive a boost with the veteran additions of NT Terrance Knighton (from Denver), S Dashon Goldson (Tampa Bay) and CB Chris Culliver (San Francisco).

Biggest Losses

Often injured LB Brian Orakpo, dominant when healthy, signed with Tennessee and sturdy RB Roy Helu left for Oakland.

Rookie To Watch

Scherff matched with veteran OT Trent Williams could give Washington potentially one of the best tackle combinations in the league. RB Matt Jones, a third-round pick from Florida, has been impressive during fall camp. His teammates call him "Bruiser" because of his 6'2" and 231-pound frame.

Marquee Match-up

Week 9 at New England which comes after a bye week.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 1 opener against visiting Miami.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 17, the last game of the regular season, at Dallas.

Overall thoughts

Although Gruden is in only his second year, he will occupy the hot seat if the Redskins do not show positive strides this season. If RGIII goes down with yet another season-impacting injury, Gruden can use that as an excuse for failure. But that's a tired brand of politics that might not work any longer in our nation's capital.



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NFC NORTH

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS



Green Bay is synonymous with dominance in the NFC North and it appeared that would not change this season until Jordy Nelson went down with a season-ending knee injury. The Packers have enough talent to make up for that significance but it takes some of their edge off. Before the Nelson injury, Chicago, Detroit, and Minnesota already felt they were catching up with Green Bay. Green Bay, an annual Super Bowl contender with quarterback Aaron Rodgers leading the way, has won the last four division titles. The Packers' schedule is a difficult one with six of their last 10 games on the road, including at Denver. Chicago and Detroit have tough non-division games on the road against Kansas City, San Diego and Seattle. Minnesota, with Adrian Peterson back loosening opposing defenses, has the easiest schedule with the most difficult non-division road games against Arizona and Denver.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC NORTH

BEARS





CHICAGO BEARS

Mister Obvious Says

Another coaching change should equate to more victories. The Bears went from defensive-minded Lovie Smith to offensive guru Marc Trestman and now find themselves somewhere in between with John Fox. The talk around Chicago is its new 3-4 defense under new coordinator Vic Fangio should bring good fortune for the Bears, especially against the Packers. Fangio went 4-0 against the Packers when he was with San Francisco.

Biggest Additions

Chicago hopes signing free agent LB Pernell McPhee, who spent four seasons with Baltimore, can make up for not re-signing veteran Lance Briggs. Veteran FS Antrel Rolle also came over from the Giants to bolster the Bears' secondary. WR Eddie Royal from San Diego was signed to replace Brandon Marshall who went to the New York Jets.

Biggest Losses

The loss of Marshall is even more significant with 1st round pick and rookie WR Kevin White most likely out this season after undergoing surgery for a stress fracture in his right shin.

Rookie To Watch

RB Jeremy Langford of Michigan State was taken in the fourth round and is having a productive fall camp while challenging for the backup spot behind Matt Forte.

Marquee Match-up

Week 11 against visiting Denver is a game to circle on the calendar with the Broncos and Peyton Manning going against their former coach. How badly do you think Fox wants to win this one?

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 13 hosting the 49ers, who the Bears beat last year in San Francisco.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 12, Thanksgiving night, at Green Bay. The Packers have the Bears' number lately and this one will be in the midst of Green Bay's playoff push.

Overall thoughts

Jay Cutler last season with weapons did not get it done and now has fewer due to Marshall's defection to the Jets and the injuries suffered by White and Alshon Jeffery (hobbled by a calf injury); not looking good for the Bears offense this year. The promising news is new general manager Ryan Pace hired Fox, an established veteran coach who is 126-96 in his career. The Bears will be geared more for 2016 and 2017 with Fox installing his system.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC NORTH

LIONS





DETROIT LIONS

Mister Obvious Says

The Ndamukong Suh experiment has come to an end for Detroit and the Lions are not lamenting over it. While Detroit's fans might criticize the Lions for not upping the ante on Suh, the Lions are fine with moving on without the annual distractions Suh brought with his ornery on-field behavior. Suh is a potential Hall of Famer but the Lions believe they brought in another defensive tackle of similar caliber in Haloti Ngata from the Ravens. Offensively, Detroit must concern itself with quarterback Matthew Stafford turning the corner. He threw more than 600 passes last year but only completed 22 of them for touchdowns.

Biggest Additions

Ngata is literally big at 6'4" and 340 pounds. Although he's had more sacks in a season than what he put up last year for Baltimore with two, he did have a career-high seven pass deflections and tied career highs with two interceptions and two forced fumbles. That means the 10-year vet is as active as ever.

Biggest Losses

Suh signed a six-year, \$114 million contract to play with Miami, ending his five-year run with Detroit. Another defensive tackle, Nick Fairley, left to the St. Louis Rams after spending four years with the Lions.

Rookie To Watch

RB Ameer Abdullah showed his value in Detroit's first preseason game, rushing for 67 yards on seven carries against the Jets. He remains behind injured Joique Bell (recovering from knee and Achilles' tendon surgery) on the depth chart but he can become the man if Bell falters or is unable to play.

Marquee Match-up

Detroit hosts Green Bay in Week 13, nine days after both teams play on Thanksgiving. It will be the last of a three-game home stand for the Lions – their second three-game home stand of the season. They could be maneuvering for a playoff spot when the Packers come to town.

Game Most Likely To Win

In Week 11, Oakland travels to Detroit.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 4 at Seattle, a week after hosting Denver.

Overall thoughts

Some of Stafford's big-play deficiencies last year were because Calvin Johnson was consistently hobbled by ankle injuries. Stafford, who has yet to win a playoff game with Detroit, has indicated that Johnson is at full health in camp and is having "a fantastic training camp." In a tough division that includes Green Bay, Chicago with new coach John Fox and Minnesota with Adrian Peterson returning, Detroit coach Jim Caldwell is in a difficult spot. If Stafford's offensive line can protect him and set up the Lions' newly-installed power running attack, Caldwell's team can control tempo and have a shot at winning most games.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC NORTH

PACKERS





GREEN BAY PACKERS

Mister Obvious Says

The season without Jordy Nelson will mean fewer blowouts and scoring outbursts due to the loss of the big-play potential he brought to Mike McCarthy's offense. Nelson was tied for a league-high of seven touchdown receptions of 40 or more yards last year, hugely contributing to the Packers leading the league in scoring. But it's not the end of the world for Aaron Rodgers and Co. with the amount of talent available. The receiver and slot positions still go five deep. The Packers still have favorable 6-to-1 odds in Las Vegas to win the Super Bowl.

Biggest Additions

Rookie WR Ty Montgomery of Stanford figures to have a bigger role with Nelson out. Montgomery's explosive athleticism shows in his kickoff return averages where he never averaged less than 25.2 yards per return while playing for Stanford.

Biggest Losses

Green Bay lost three linebackers to free agency, including veteran A.J. Hawk, who signed with Cincinnati. The others are Brad Jones (now with the Eagles) and Jamari Lattimore (Jets).

Rookie To Watch

With the linebacker defections, fourth-round draft pick Jake Ryan of Michigan figures to have plenty of opportunities to make his mark with the Green Bay defense.

Marquee Match-up

The Week 14 home game against Dallas figures to have plenty of playoff implications.

Game Most Likely To Win

As odd as it may sound, a road game against San Francisco in Week 4 looks to be Green Bay's likeliest victory.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 8 at Denver will be a difficult challenge although the team will have a week off the previous week.

Overall thoughts

Don't cry for Green Bay. The Packers are still the team to beat without Nelson. They have Rodgers, one of the best quarterbacks in the NFL. They have Eddie Lacy, a bruising running back that will take pressure off of Rodgers. The wide receiver corps is still one of the most dangerous in the NFC with Randall Cobb, Davante Adams, Jeff Janis, Jared Abbrederis and Montgomery. The defense has a solid nucleus with one of the best linebacker groups in Clay Matthews, Nick Perry, Mike Neal and Julius Peppers.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC NORTH

Vikings





MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Mister Obvious Says

Adrian Peterson's return from his suspension last year for all but one game makes the Vikings NFC North contenders ... if quarterback Teddy Bridgewater makes great strides in his second season. The acquisition of speedy, sure-handed wide receiver Mike Wallace from Miami will keep opposing defenses honest. They can't crowd the box trying to stop Peterson while leaving Wallace on an island covered by only a cornerback. The difference obviously will be whether Bridgewater can improve upon his touchdown-to-interception ratio from his rookie season. He threw 14 touchdown passes with 12 interceptions last year.

Biggest Additions

Wallace is a big-play receiver who tied his career-high of 10 touchdown receptions with Miami last year. The former Steelers standout, in his seventh year, averages 62.5 receptions for 972 yards a season.

Biggest Losses

Minnesota's release of veteran WR Greg Jennings made room for Wallace to come over from Miami. Jennings, in turn, signed with the Dolphins.

Rookie To Watch

Former UCLA LB Eric Kendricks is touted as a defensive rookie of the year candidate by Minnesota because of his instinct, speed and tackling ability.

Marquee Match-up

Seattle comes to town in Week 13 in the Vikings' biggest non-divisional game at home all season.

Game Most Likely To Win

In Week 16, the Vikings host the New York Giants before traveling to Green Bay for the regular-season finale the following week.

Game Most Likely to Lose

The schedule-makers were not kind having Minnesota play at Arizona in Week 14 on a Thursday night four days after the Vikings host Seattle.

Overall thoughts

An improving young defense with an offense that features Peterson and Wallace is enough to make Minnesota think of a NFC North title this year. Much of how coach Mike Zimmer's team fares this year will be based on its offensive consistency and execution with Bridgewater at quarterback. The good news is Bridgewater has 12 starts to his credit from last year and had one of his better games late in the year at Miami. The not-so-good news is that the Vikings' offensive line that allowed 39 sacks last year mostly returns. Ouch.

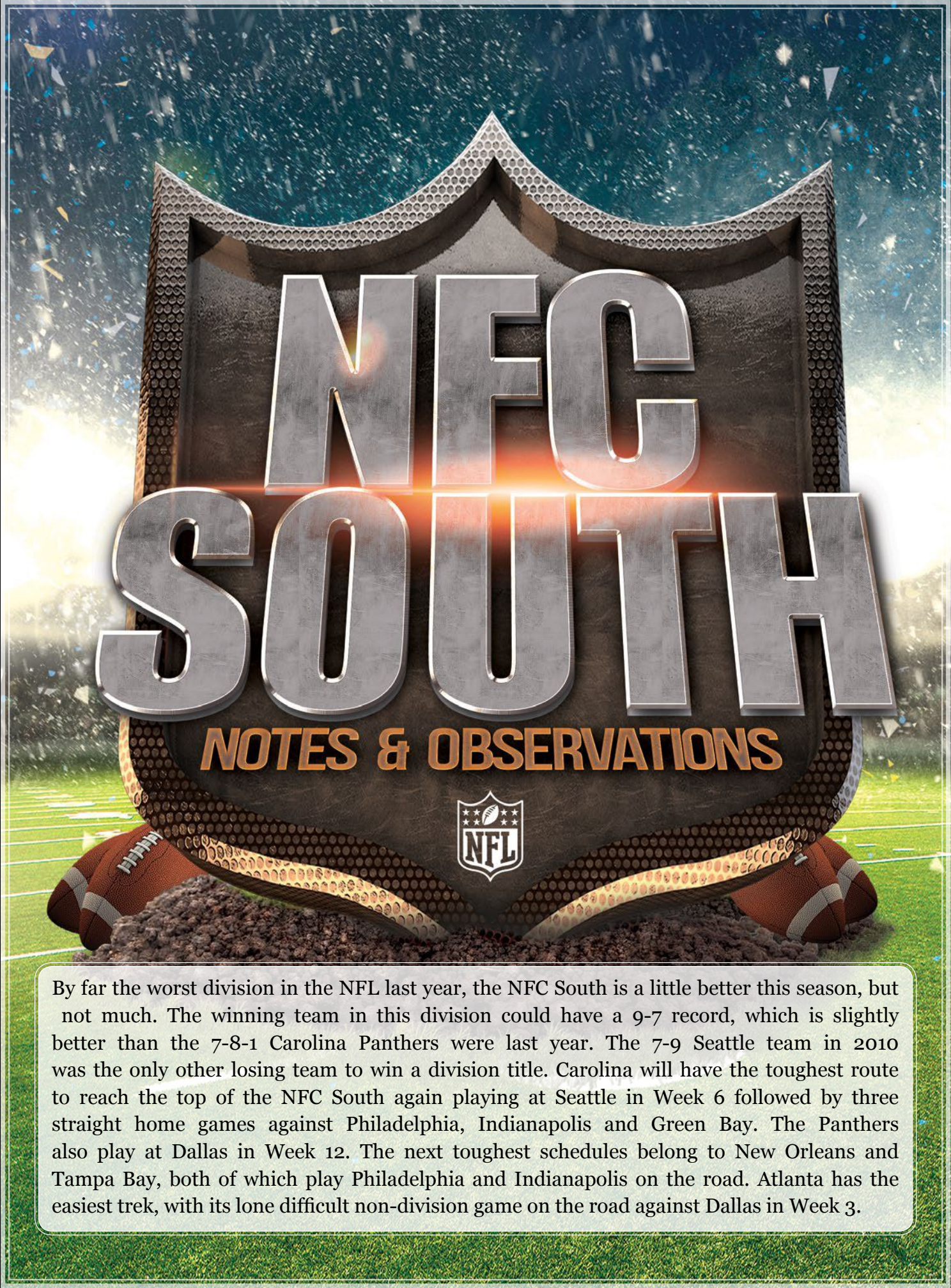


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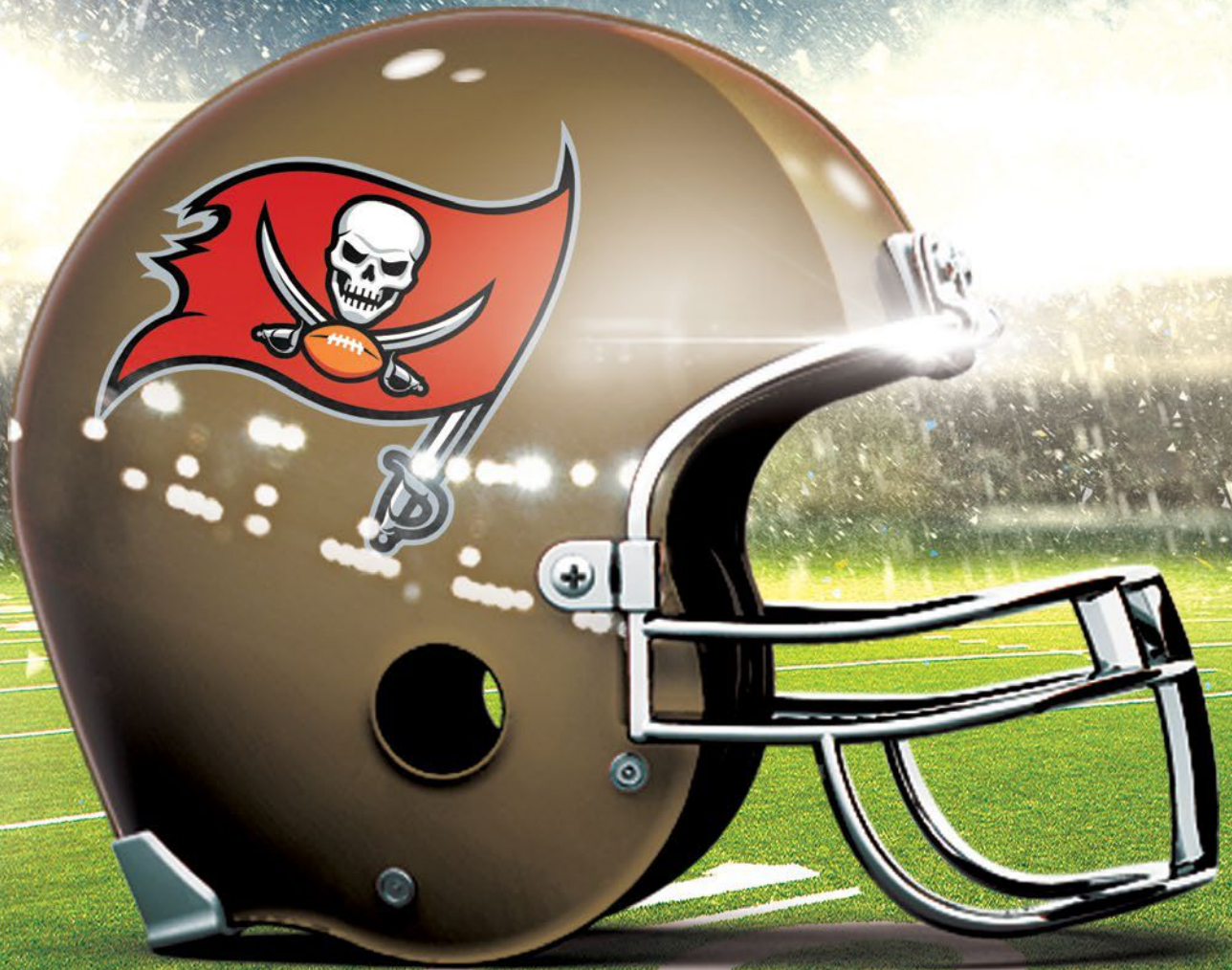
NFC SOUTH

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS



By far the worst division in the NFL last year, the NFC South is a little better this season, but not much. The winning team in this division could have a 9-7 record, which is slightly better than the 7-8-1 Carolina Panthers were last year. The 7-9 Seattle team in 2010 was the only other losing team to win a division title. Carolina will have the toughest route to reach the top of the NFC South again playing at Seattle in Week 6 followed by three straight home games against Philadelphia, Indianapolis and Green Bay. The Panthers also play at Dallas in Week 12. The next toughest schedules belong to New Orleans and Tampa Bay, both of which play Philadelphia and Indianapolis on the road. Atlanta has the easiest trek, with its lone difficult non-division game on the road against Dallas in Week 3.

T A M P A B A Y
BUCCANEERS





TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Mister Obvious Says

All eyes will be on No. 1 draft choice Jameis Winston , who could put all of those off-the-field character concerns to rest by staying clean and keeping the Bucs in a playoff hunt. Winston is in a perfect situation playing for new offensive coordinator Dirk Koetter, one of the most respected offensive minds in the game. Koetter keeps the game vertical with the pass which should accentuate Winston's talents as a strong-armed quarterback. If he can keep his interceptions to a minimum, the Bucs may have a chance.

Biggest Additions

Former Bears coach Lovie Smith welcomes one of his old players from Chicago, DT Henry Melton, who played last year with Dallas. Melton is well-schooled in Smith's Tampa-2 defense when he was a menacing pass rusher with Chicago.

Biggest Losses

DE Michael Johnson was cut by Tampa Bay after only one year, so he returned to Cincinnati where he established himself as one of the best pass rushers in the league in his first five seasons in the league. Hard to say cutting a player is a significant loss. We're reaching here.

Rookie To Watch

Winston, the 2013 Heisman winner who brings some baggage with him for off-the-field incidents at Florida State. How will he adapt to the NFL in a 17-week schedule with a lot of highs and lows?

Marquee Match-up

In Week 12 the Buccaneers travel to Indianapolis in a game that will garner a lot of attention because of the two young quarterbacks – Andrew Luck and Winston.

Game Most Likely To Win

Tampa Bay hosts Jacksonville in Week 5.

Game Most Likely to Lose

The game against the Colts comes a week after the Buccaneers play at Philadelphia.

Overall thoughts

With Smith in his second year as head coach, the players know his schemes better, especially on defense with the Tampa-2. The 4-3 defensive alignment is predicated on pass coverage with linebackers dropping back. The Tampa-2 should come in handy in the division against the passing offenses of New Orleans and Atlanta and the difficulty Carolina's Cam Newton can bring with his arm and mobility. Offensively, Winston brings an excitement to Tampa that has escaped the Buccaneers in recent years with Josh McCown, Josh Freeman, Chris Simms, Bruce Gradkowski and Brian Griese.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC SOUTH

ATLANTA FALCONS





ATLANTA FALCONS

Mister Obvious Says

The Falcons are optimistic with a fresh start, hiring former Seattle defensive coordinator Dan Quinn to be their head coach, replacing the once-popular Mike Smith. The Falcons combined to win 10 games in the last two years after they averaged at least 10 wins a year in Smith's five previous seasons. Quinn hired former Redskins and Browns offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan to jumpstart the Falcons' offense that had gone stagnant, especially with the running game behind QB Matt Ryan.

Biggest Additions

LB Brooks Reed came over from Houston to help shore up Atlanta's defense. He is coming off his best season as a pro with 41 tackles, three sacks, one interception and four passes deflected.

Biggest Losses

S Dwight Lowery, who did not allow a touchdown to be caught against him last year, is now with the Indianapolis Colts.

Rookie To Watch

DT Grady Jarrett, son of former Atlanta LB Jessie Tuggle, was underrated coming out of Clemson because of his size (6'1" and 304 pounds) but Atlanta's coaches like him because of his strength and hustle on every play.

Marquee Match-up

Week 16, two days after Christmas, Atlanta hosts Carolina in a game that could determine the NFC South winner. The Panthers have won in Atlanta the last two seasons, including a 34-3 blowout that determined the division champ last year.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 5 at home against the Redskins, who may or may not have Robert Griffin III at quarterback by then.

Game Most Likely to Lose

The Week 3 game at Dallas will be tough. It wraps up Atlanta stretch of playing NFC East teams, as they host Philly in the season opener and follow with a game at New York before heading to Dallas.

Overall thoughts

It was time for a change and Quinn brings a winning pedigree from Seattle with him. He should bring the fun back to Atlanta; something Smith started but couldn't finish. Ryan and high-profile receiver Julio Jones, with a stronger running game, should equate to more victories. Quinn's specialty is on the defensive side of the ball and the Falcons are in need of the attention, allowing a league-high 398.2 yards per game last year. In a weak division, the slightest improvement might be enough to come out on top.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC SOUTH

CAROLINA PANTHERS





CAROLINA PANTHERS

Mister Obvious Says

What Carolina Panthers team will show up this year? The one that ended last year strong, ranking as the top rushing team in the NFL after its bye week? The one that finished with a top 10 offense and top 5 defense? Or the team that was 7-8-1 overall and was in the bottom 10 in yards gained and yards allowed by the 11th week of last season?

Biggest Additions

A lack of salary cap space prevented Carolina from signing big-name free agents although wide receiver and returner Ted Ginn Jr. could be a playmaker.

Biggest Losses

RB DeAngelo Williams, who played in only six games last year because of an ankle injury, left for Pittsburgh after spending his first nine seasons with Carolina.

Rookie To Watch

LB Shaq Thompson - Grant High School in Sacramento, Ca - excelled on both sides of the ball last year for the Washington Huskies, where he also dazzled as a running back. His athleticism has impressed the Panthers coach Ron Rivera who said he wants Thompson to play alongside veterans Thomas Davis and Luke Kuechly.

Marquee Match-up

The Panthers' game at Dallas on Thanksgiving Day in Week 12 should be entertaining as you consume turkey and fixings.

Game Most Likely To Win

Before heading to Dallas in a very short week, Carolina hopes to dispose of visiting Washington in Week 11.

Game Most Likely to Lose

That Dallas game in Week 12 will be difficult because of the four days to prepare, not to mention the travel and the distraction a Thanksgiving game brings.

Overall thoughts

Carolina combines a potentially potent offense behind Newton with a strong defense that includes an abundance of athleticism on the ends and in the secondary. The Panthers have most of the pieces back from last year's team that gathered steam and won a playoff game despite a 7-8-1 season at the end of the regular season. The key will be the health of RB Jonathan Stewart and the effectiveness of the offensive line to give Newton time to operate.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC SOUTH

SAINTS





NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Mister Obvious Says

Already dangerous QB Drew Brees will play behind an improved offensive line with Mark Ingram and C.J. Spiller running the ball. Don't be surprised to see Brees revert to his days of passing for more than 5,000 yards with close to 40 touchdowns. A decrease in production should not occur from last year when the Saints led the NFL in total offensive yards despite top receivers Jimmy Graham and Kenny Stills departing. WR Brandin Cooks, a second-year player and featured in the September 2013 issue of Kandy, figures to have a breakout season as a big-play player among New Orleans' deep receiving corps.

Biggest Additions

New Orleans obtained Pro Bowl center Max Unger from Seattle in the Jimmy Graham trade; it was an obvious trade to protect the Saints most important player, Brees. Spiller's acquisition gives New Orleans an effective backup running back behind Ingram.

Biggest Losses

Graham's absence puts the onus on 12-year veteran TE Benjamin Watson to fill the void. Stills, who had 931 receiving yards last year, signed with Miami.

Rookie To Watch

Another talented LB from Washington's program Hau'oli Kikaha is making quite an impression on New Orleans head coach Sean Payton and his defensive coaches. The second-rounder will be in the mix with the Saints' pass-rush schemes this year. He had a school-record 32 sacks at Washington in his career, including a nation's best 19 last year.

Marquee Match-up

Dallas comes to town in Week 4.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 16 against Jacksonville at home.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 5 at Philadelphia, a week after playing Dallas.

Overall thoughts

New Orleans' success this season is predicated on a higher volume of skilled players rather than having elite players with questionable backups. Brees is not getting any younger at 36. This could be a season he makes one of his final pushes for a deep playoff run. The Saints look better equipped to make that happen. The defense is young, but talented, which means it might take time to develop. It will be fun for Payton to see if it get better as the season goes along.



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NFC WEST

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS



The NFC West will not be as amusing as the last few years because Jim Harbaugh is no longer with the 49ers. It might not also be as dominant because of his absence. The division has represented the NFC in the last three Super Bowls with Seattle winning two years ago and the Seahawks and 49ers coming up very short in the two defeats. The NFC West is certainly the best overall conference with the four teams averaging more than 9.25 wins the last two years. With the 49ers in turmoil, it will be interesting to see if St. Louis can rise up. The Rams have one of the tougher schedules however playing at Green Bay, Baltimore and Cincinnati. The Seahawks also have it tough with games at Cincinnati, Dallas and Baltimore. San Francisco has it the easiest with a game at Pittsburgh as its toughest non-division road game. Arizona is close with games at Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC WEST

49ERS





SAN FRANCISCO 49'ERS

Mister Obvious Says

After all of San Francisco's off-the-field turmoil, do not expect eight-year defensive line coach Jim Tomsula to match what Harbaugh did as head coach. Harbaugh's record was 44-19-1 in four seasons with three playoff appearances, including a run to the Super Bowl in 2013. Six players, including DE Aldon Smith, have been arrested for various offenses over the last year. Smith's release means only 11 players remain from the 53-man roster that was in the Super Bowl two years ago. Harbaugh bolted after a power struggle with the front office. Looks like he is not to blame for this mess.

Biggest Additions

DE Darnell Dockett, a veteran in his 11th season, left division rival Arizona to sign with 49ers, which needed to alleviate significant losses on defense due to retirements. WR Torrey Smith comes in from Baltimore to replace Michael Crabtree, a free agent who signed with Oakland. Another big transition is at running back with Frank Gore off to Indianapolis and Reggie Bush entering from Detroit.

Biggest Losses

Besides Aldon Smith, Crabtree and Gore, three prominent contributors to San Francisco's defense retired after last season, including 30-year-old veteran LB Patrick Willis. DE Justin Smith cited recurring toe problems for his retirement. The biggest surprise was LB Chris Borland hanging up the pads because of concussion concerns following a productive rookie season.

Rookie To Watch

DT Arik Armstead of Oregon was drafted to help fill the void of talent on the defensive line. Armstead has the skill to be an impact player, once he improve his pass-rushing skills.

Marquee Match-up

How about San Francisco traveling to Pittsburgh in Week 2? Those franchises have combined for 14 Super Bowl appearances with a combined record of 11-3.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 9 at home against Atlanta. Tough, tough schedule.

Game Most Likely to Lose

So many possibilities with San Francisco playing Seattle twice, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Cincinnati. The Thursday night game against the visiting Seahawks in Week 7 looks like a defeat, four days after playing a physical Ravens defense.

Overall thoughts

With Tomsula as the new coach San Francisco has new coordinators, both of whom are trying to prove their worth. Geep Chryst, San Francisco's quarterbacks coach the last year four years, takes over as offensive coordinator. Former Cleveland and New York Jets coach, and ESPN analyst, Eric Mangini is the new defensive coordinator. The 49ers have ranked 20th or worse in total offense three of the last four seasons. Mangini did not last long as a head coach with the Browns and Jets. The 49ers are very much a mystery this year in a tough division.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC WEST

ARIZONA CARDINALS





ARIZONA CARDINALS

Mister Obvious Says

The Cardinals need 35-year-old QB Carson Palmer to stay healthy. It's that simple. They started 9-1 last year and finished 11-6 with a three-game losing streak because they could not hold up without Palmer, who was lost late in the season with a knee injury. He has looked in command in preseason drills and games after undergoing surgery on the knee - his second time under the knife for a knee injury. A strong return will give a boost to the Cardinals' 2015 confidence.

Biggest Additions

Arizona's front office was elated that OT D.J. Humphries of Florida fell to the No. 24 slot in the first round of the NFL draft. The Cardinals needed to bolster the offensive line to protect Palmer and his backups.

Biggest Losses

CB Antonio Cromartie, who had three picks last year, followed former Cardinals defensive coordinator Todd Bowles to New York, where Bowles is the new Jets coach.

Rookie To Watch

RB David Johnson, a surprise third-round selection, has looked impressive, living up to his gaudy numbers (1,553 yards and 17 touchdowns) at Northern Iowa last year. Some label him a young Matt Forte.

Marquee Match-up

Week 17, the regular-season finale against Seattle at home.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 3 at home against San Francisco. It will take the 49ers a while to adapt to the new coaching regime.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 10 at Seattle. The game is in a stretch of six road games in nine weeks.

Overall thoughts

If you are not a believer in Bruce Arians, you should be because even when things aren't going well, his teams somehow keep winning. Arizona has won 21 of 32 regular-season games with Arians has the head coach despite statistical disadvantages. Despite an offense rankin24th in scoring (310 points) and yards per game (319.8), the Cardinals still made the playoffs for the first time since 2009 winning. Arizona's defense allowed the ninth-most yards per game (368.2). The difference - Arians' players believe in him and rally around him no matter the circumstance.



ST. LOUIS
Rams





ST. LOUIS RAMS

Mister Obvious Says

Jeff Fisher needs a winning season. He is 20-27-1 with the Rams since his hire in 2012. Dating back to his days with Tennessee, Fisher has not achieved a winning record in his last five seasons. The Rams made a change at the most important position – quarterback – trading away injury-prone Sam Bradford to Philadelphia for the unproven-yet-promising Nick Foles. With a revamped offensive line – the Rams took four linemen on draft day – and running backs Todd Gurley and Tre Mason, it's obvious Fisher knows his offense must come to life for him to keep his job. The Rams ranked 28th last year, averaging only 314.7 yards per game.

Biggest Additions

Foles was good enough to become Chip Kelly's starter in Philadelphia, managing the quick-read offense better than his competition there. Expect St. Louis, which had the 10th-fewest passing attempts in the league last year, to open things up with Foles behind center.

Biggest Losses

Bradford, but his second torn ACL injury limited him to only seven games last season.

Rookie To Watch

Injuries are not entirely a deterrent for the Rams, who drafted Georgia's Todd Gurley with the hope his surgically repaired left knee will be strong enough this season. Gurley had 773 yards rushing through the first five games with Georgia before serving a four-game suspension for an NCAA rules violation. When he returned against Auburn, he suffered the serious knee injury.

Marquee Match-up

The Rams play at Green Bay in Week 5.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 7 at home against Cleveland.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 12 at Cincinnati, a week after the Rams will face a physical challenge in Baltimore.

Overall thoughts

The Rams required significant roster moves after another subpar year at 6-10 and they made them at quarterback and with their coordinators. Frank Cignetti was promoted to offensive coordinator after spending the previous three seasons as the quarterbacks coach. The Rams haven't made the playoffs since 2004. They are 49-110-1 in that span.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - NFC WEST

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS





SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Mister Obvious Says

Russell Wilson and Marshawn Lynch get a lot of pub but it's really Seattle's defense that has made the Seahawks a juggernaut the last couple of seasons. They have allowed the fewest points in each of the past three seasons, and the fewest yards in the past two under defensive coordinator Dan Quinn. With Quinn now the head coach at Atlanta, defensive backs coach Kris Richard will take over, probably without missing a beat. Richard has worked under coach Pete Carroll since 2008.

Biggest Additions

Seattle's acquisition of TE Jimmy Graham from New Orleans for center Max Unger and a first-round pick should provide Wilson more flexibility. He's a big target who is always a scoring threat, especially in the red zone.

Biggest Losses

WR Tyler Lockett, a Kansas State product drafted in the third round, adds to Wilson's weapons at the slot position with his 4.4-second speed in the 40.

Rookie To Watch

WR Tyler Lockett, a Kansas State product drafted in the third round, adds to Wilson's weapons at the slot position with his 4.4-second speed in the 40.

Marquee Match-up

The Week 8 matchup at Dallas could be a preview of the NFC title game.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 15 at home against Cleveland.

Game Most Likely to Lose

The Sunday night game at Baltimore in Week 14 will be more difficult than the Week 2 encounter with Green Bay at Lambeau Field. Green Bay will not have frigid conditions on Sept. 20.

Overall thoughts

How much has last year's loss to the Super Bowl to New England, only 1 yard short, played in the mind of Carroll and his team? Probably not much although it will be difficult for the Seahawks to come out of the gate strong. They begin the season on the road against St. Louis and Green Bay before playing at home in Week 3 against Chicago. If they slip in those first two games and start 0-2, it will be interesting to see how the Seahawks respond. The bottom line: You can always count on Richard Sherman and Seattle's defense to keep you in the game. They'll be there in the end.

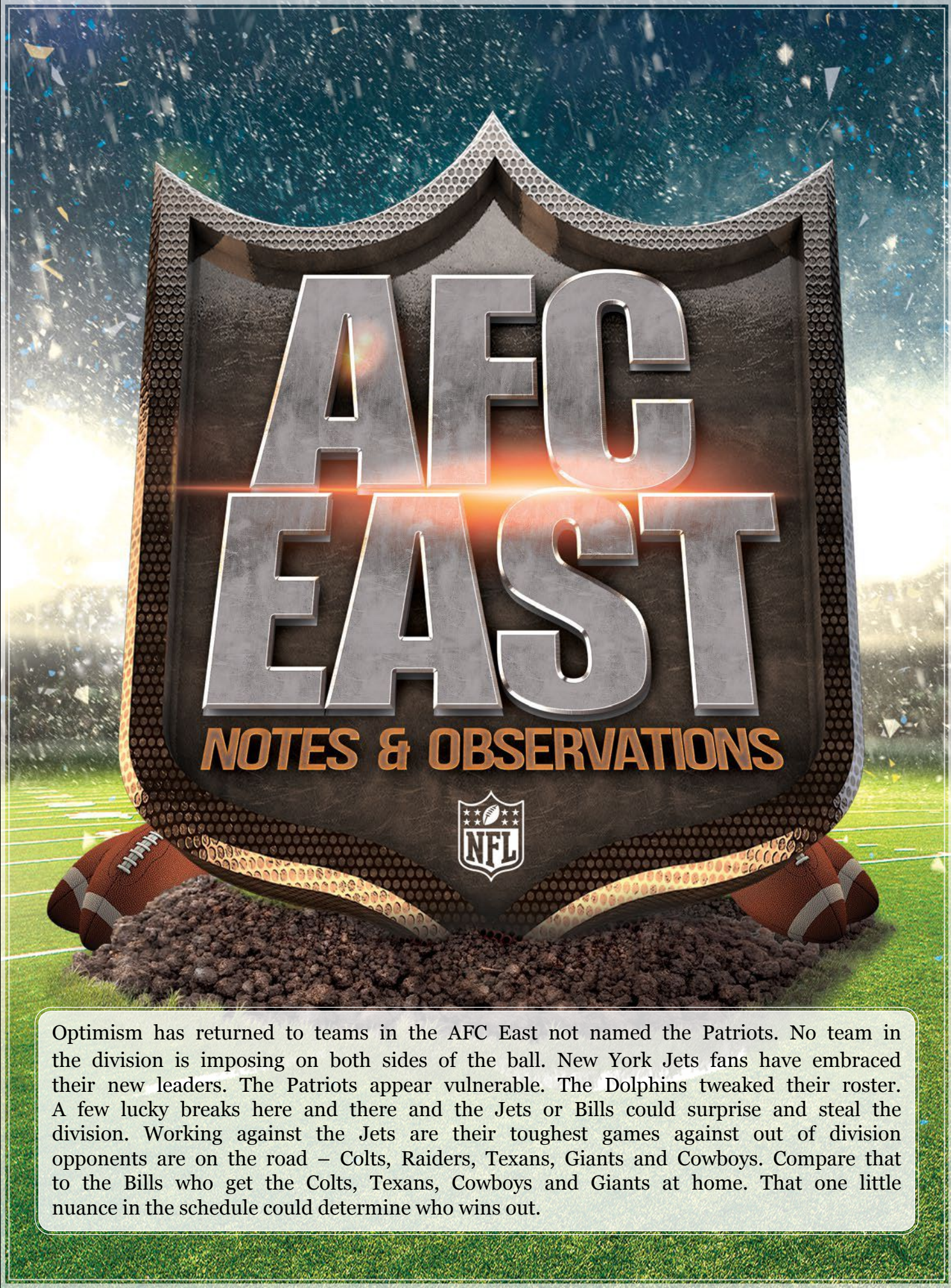


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A large, 3D-rendered shield-shaped graphic with a football field background. The shield has a dark, textured interior and a metallic, perforated border. The text 'AFC EAST' is written in large, bold, metallic letters across the center. Below it, 'NOTES & OBSERVATIONS' is written in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font. At the bottom center of the shield is the NFL logo. Two footballs are positioned at the base of the shield, appearing to be buried in a mound of dirt. The background shows a football field with green grass and white yard lines, with a bright sun or stadium lights creating a lens flare effect. Confetti is scattered in the air.

AFC EAST

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS



Optimism has returned to teams in the AFC East not named the Patriots. No team in the division is imposing on both sides of the ball. New York Jets fans have embraced their new leaders. The Patriots appear vulnerable. The Dolphins tweaked their roster. A few lucky breaks here and there and the Jets or Bills could surprise and steal the division. Working against the Jets are their toughest games against out of division opponents are on the road – Colts, Raiders, Texans, Giants and Cowboys. Compare that to the Bills who get the Colts, Texans, Cowboys and Giants at home. That one little nuance in the schedule could determine who wins out.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC EAST

BILLS





BUFFALO BILLS

Mister Obvious Says

The Bills brought in Rex Ryan as their new head coach and he inherit one of the top defenses in the league. As was his challenge with the Jets, Rex faces an uncertain situation at quarterback; some would argue the quarterback situation he left with the Jets was better than the one he inherits in Buffalo.

Biggest Additions

Offensive acquisitions QB Matt Cassel and RB LeSean McCoy top our list of off-season moves for the Bills. The question in Buffalo is which Matt Cassel is going to show up on game day. McCoy will fit nicely into Rex's ground and pound strategy.

Biggest Losses

In order to land McCoy from the Eagles the Bills had to give up LB Kiko Alonso who missed the entire 2014 season due to a knee injury. Looks like a winning trade for the Bills. McCoy also replaces RB C.J. Spiller who signed as a free agent with the Saints in the off-season. Some would argue letting LB Brandon Spikes leave via free agency was the biggest lost but when it comes to Defense, in Rex we trust is the motto.

Rookie To Watch

Right guard John Miller of Louisville will begin the season as starter despite being drafted in the third round. The success of the Bills season may hinge on how well this rookie contributes as Rex likes the ground and pound game.

Marquee Match-up

Normally, when you are speaking of a Rex Ryan coached team, the games you circle on your calendar are those against Tom Brady and the Patriots. However, for this season at least, it would be hard to argue against the week 10 match-up when Rex and the Bills travel to the Meadowlands to play the Jets. There is a high probability that it will not come down to this but imagine the hysteria if the Bills last regular game of the season, played at home, against the Jets was for a play-off spot between the teams. Oh, how the NYC tabloids would have a field day.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 9 at home against the Dolphins.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 12 on the road against the Chiefs. This game follows their week 11 Monday night match-up on the road against the Patriots.

Overall thoughts

At first glance, the Bills appear to have a brutal schedule with non-division games against the Texans, Cowboys, Eagles, aforementioned Chiefs, Bengals, Giants, and Colts – to name a few. But then you realize the schedule maker was definitely smiling on Buffalo when it came time to map the games. They are home against the Colts, Texans, Cowboys, Bengals and Giants, which is always a plus in the NFL. The Chiefs and Eagles will be their toughest non-division road games. They have 3 road games in a row in November but the first game in that stretch is a Thursday night tilt against the Jets and then they have 11 days off to get ready for New England. Depending on the offense, the Bills could come out of that stretch either 2-1 or 0-3. Their season could very well be determined during that road trip, assuming they take care of business at home against the Dolphins in the preceding week.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC EAST

MIAMI Dolphins





MIAMI DOLPHINS

Mister Obvious Says

A lot of new faces in Miami's receiving corps. Miami felt it had to address a major problem with the team and went out and did it. If there is one man smiling in Miami it has to be QB Ryan Tannehill.

Biggest Additions

Ndamukong Suh. That's it. It starts and ends with him.

Biggest Losses

TE Charles Clay to the Bills. But, they feel Jordan Cameron who they signed away from the Browns will fill the role.

Rookie To Watch

14th overall pick, WR Devante Parker of Louisville will have a lot of eyes on him this season. Fortunately, he will not have to carry the weight of the receiving corps as he will have veteran free agent signees Kenny Stills, Greg Jennings and the aforementioned Jordan Cameron to help carry the burden.

Marquee Match-up

We circled their week 6 game on the road against the Titans as the game of the year for the Dolphins. We will know based on the outcome of this game the direction of the Dolphins season for the remainder of the year.

Game Most Likely To Win

Since we have to pick one, we are going to say week 2 against the Jaguars. Even though Miami is going on the road we view this as the game they are most likely to win.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 15 on the road at the Chargers. The Chargers are looking like a beast this season and should be in the midst of battling for the division crown when the Dolphins come to town.

Overall thoughts

For all the activity Miami undertook in the off-season to address its receiving corps, we don't see any single move that tremendously upgraded the position. The hope in Miami has to be that as a collective group the receivers will elevate the passing threat to opposing teams. The addition of Suh could be viewed as the biggest defensive addition in the division. That is, unless you are in New York where they will say bringing back Revis Island was the biggest defensive addition in the division. Of course, one could argue that moving from New England to New York was not addition to the division. We'll leave it to you the fans to argue that point.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC EAST

JETS





NEW YORK JETS

Mister Obvious Says

Owner Woody Johnson brought in new management to right the ship, so to speak. Gone are GM John Idzik and head coach Rex Ryan. Brought in to replace them are head coach Todd Bowles and general manager Mike Maccagnan. With new leadership comes a new attitude. Humility has replaced audacity. Jets fans are rejoicing.

Biggest Additions

WR Brandon Marshall, CB Darrelle Revis, QB Ryan Fitzpatrick, CB Antonio Cromartie. There is no question that the lack of quality corners and wide receivers last season cost head coach Rex Ryan his job. Despite one of the best front seven defenses in the league they could not 'cover' for the sieves in the secondary. New management aggressively addressed that issue in the off-season, starting by bringing back prodigal son Darrelle Revis and his sidekick, Antonio Cromartie.

Biggest Losses

Losing DT Kendrick Ellis to the Giants hurt the depth of the interior line but the hope is rookie first round pick Leonard Williams can pick up the snaps that Ellis took.

Rookie To Watch

DL Leonard Williams of USC. The draft gods were smiling on the Jets when the consensus top player in the draft fell to them at pick number 7. Although already a strength of the Jets, the talent possessed by Williams was too much to pass. Due to the suspension of DL Sheldon Richardson for violating the league's drug policy, Williams will start immediately in week 1.

Marquee Match-up

Week 13 when they match up against their co-tenants the Giants. The battle for New York City bragging rights will be on the line and possibly the play-off hopes for both teams.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 9 at home against the Jaguars.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 2 on the road against the Colts. Too many new faces going up against a cohesive, oiled machine too early in the season.

Overall thoughts

The Jets should challenge the Bills and Texans for defensive bragging rights this season. The offense should be improved over last season's team. WR Brandon Marshall comes over from the Bears to improve a unit in desperate need of help. The key to the offense this season will be the play of the offensive line. If they can open up holes for the running game and give the QB, whoever it may be, time to throw the rock to Marshall the Jets could be a team to challenge for the division.





Patriots





NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Mister Obvious Says

Deflategate. Listen, we are not going to hide our disdain for the Patriots. So, if you are a Patriots fan you can just skip this section now. Brady and his smug smile is all that is wrong with sports today. What makes sports great is called sportsmanship. The word 'sports' is part of it. Something neither Brady, Coach Hoodie or Kraft know anything about. To them, it is all about gamesmanship - the art or practice of winning games by questionable expedients without actually violating the rules. And, if you disagree with us on that then you are just a homer and there is no reasoning with you. To patronize Patriots fans a bit, we'll throw Peyton Manning into this same category with his quick snaps while the defense is rushing players on and off the field. There is nothing sportsman about it.

Biggest Additions

None. They signed no one noteworthy.

Biggest Losses

Revis. Gone home to the Jets. Irreplaceable.

Rookie To Watch

Safety Jordan Richards of Stanford. A surprise 2nd round pick, who was a sixth round project by most draft pundits. The kid from Folsom High School in California was a starter all 4 years at Stanford. He is said to have a high football IQ, a quarterback for the defense who knows where everyone is supposed to be positioned for each play call.

Marquee Match-up

Week 12 at the Broncos. Brady versus Manning one more time. What is the over / under on how many times we will hear the word 'deflategate' mentioned during the telecast.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 9 at home against the Redskins. We were ready to pencil in week 3 at home against the Jaguars but with the uncertainty regarding Brady's availability we feel safer with the Redskins pick.

Game Most Likely to Lose

We are going to say week 10 on the road against the Giants. The G-Men just seem to have Brady's number.

Overall thoughts

The season will be dominated by talk of deflategate and how much time, if any, Brady misses due to a suspension. The AFC East is tougher than past seasons, especially on the defensive side of the ball. Does coach Hoodie have any more tricks hidden up his sleeve to capture another division crown? This team does not strike fear into the opposition but neither did last year's team.

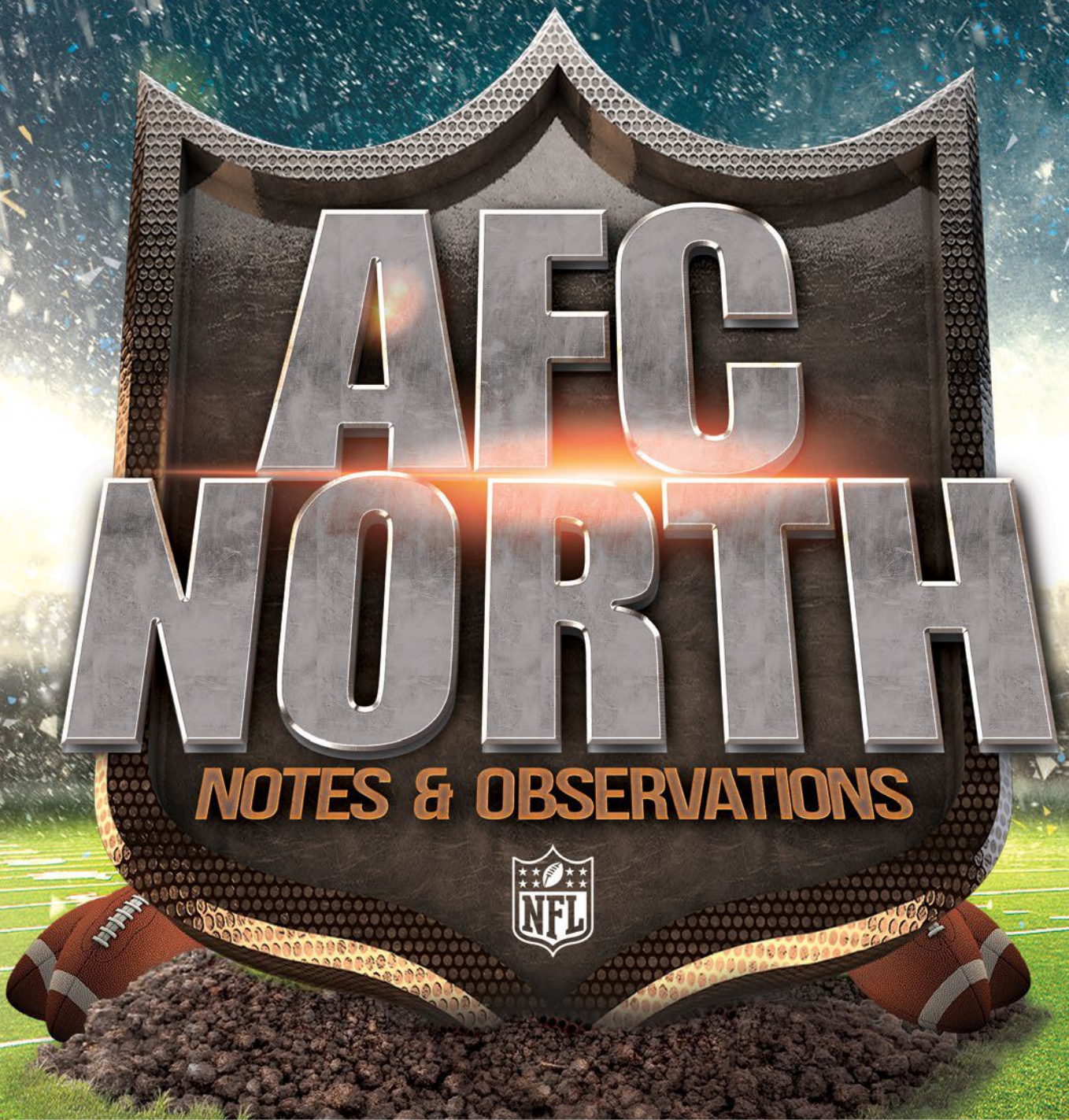


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Many analysts believe the AFC North is the best division in the NFL. It's difficult to argue against that. Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Baltimore are annual playoff contenders. Cleveland is the exception although the Browns showed signs of life last year when they won six of eight games before finishing with a five-game losing streak. The Steelers and Bengals have the toughest schedules with the Steelers traveling to New England, San Diego and Seattle and the Bengals visiting Denver and Arizona. The Ravens play three of their last four games at home, which could be the difference down the stretch.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC NORTH

CINCINNATI BENGALS





CINCINNATI BENGALS

Mister Obvious Says

If QB Andy Dalton could have a productive, mistake-free solid season the Bengals will certainly challenge for the division title. He has plenty of weapons with receivers A.J. Green, Marvin Jones, Mohamed Sanu and tight end Tyler Eifert. Add to that group running backs Jeremy Hill and Giovanni Bernard and Dalton should have it made.

Biggest Additions

LB A.J. Hawk's arrival from Green Bay helps a Cincinnati defense that is in need of reinforcements.

Biggest Losses

TE Jermaine Gresham had 62 receptions for 460 yards and five touchdowns last season but he is now with Arizona, opening the door for Eifert or third-round draft choice Tyler Kroft to contribute.

Rookie To Watch

Kroft should get plenty of reps while Cincinnati coach Marvin Lewis tries to settle on a tight end that can not only catch but serve as a capable blocker for Dalton.

Marquee Match-up

The regular season-finale at home against Baltimore shapes up to be a doozy with the winner likely headed to the playoffs.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 12 against St. Louis, a dome team that must travel to frigid Cincinnati.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 6 against Buffalo, the last game before Cincinnati's bye week and right after hosting Seattle. Will the Bengals' collective heads be in the game against Buffalo?

Overall thoughts

The Bengals are formidable at most positions except on defense. They had a league-worst 20 sacks last season which must eat at Lewis who is known for his defensive mind. Most of the linebacker positions are up for grabs and the secondary needs time to develop. So while Cincinnati's offense is brimming with talent, its defense could hold it down. If the defense shows signs of improvement, the Bengals, as a whole, will also.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC NORTH

BROWNS





CLEVELAND BROWNS

Mister Obvious Says

Will Johnny Football (Johnny Manziel) cut it? The biggest question for Cleveland and its quarterback situation is will any signal caller emerge fit to lead the Browns to a winning season? Josh McCown was brought in from Tampa Bay to try to take over from where Brian Hoyer left off, a veteran showing some promise. Will that be enough with Manziel still in need to learn the ropes?

Biggest Additions

In addition to Hoyer, Cleveland revamped its passing game by acquiring wide receivers Dwayne Bowe from Kansas City and Brian Hartline from Miami.

Biggest Losses

Jordan Cameron was a productive tight end Cleveland should have tried to keep but he landed with Miami. WR Josh Gordon is out for the season, serving a one-year suspension levied by the NFL for substance abuse. Hoyer bounced to Houston.

Rookie To Watch

Cleveland's already formidable offensive line became stronger with the selection of Florida State center Cameron Erving in the first round of the draft.

Marquee Match-up

Week 12 at home against Baltimore, comes after a bye week and kicks off a three-game home stand that includes Cincinnati and San Francisco. If the Browns want to make a move toward the postseason, this is when it needs to happen.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 2 against visiting Tennessee and rookie quarterback Marcus Mariota, who should get a rude welcome in the Dawg Pound.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 15 at Seattle, which is always tough to beat at home, let alone in December.

Overall thoughts

The Browns showed they can be a good team under Mike Pettine, winning six of eight games in one stretch last season. The biggest key for Pettine is finding consistency from his quarterback position, which will be a tough assignment in a very competitive AFC North. Is McCown or Manziel good enough to take Cleveland to the next level?



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC NORTH

BALTIMORE
RAVENS





BALTIMORE RAVENS

Mister Obvious Says

Now a year past the Ray Rice domestic-violence fiasco, Ravens' coach John Harbaugh still has an offense that is still shaken by other personnel moves. Justin Forsett has emerged as Baltimore's featured back. Veteran receiver Torrey Smith and tight end Owen Daniels are replaced by rookies Breshad Perriman and Maxx Williams, respectively. The adjustments made on offense should evolve quicker due to veteran Joe Flacco's leadership.

Biggest Additions

Baltimore rarely makes notable offseason acquisitions but this year general manager Ozzie Newsome bolstered the Ravens' secondary with the signing of free agent safety Kendrick Lewis from Kansas City and cornerback Kyle Arrington from New England.

Biggest Losses

WR Torrey Smith, who played the first four years of his career with the Ravens, is gone to San Francisco. Rice is looking for an employer while Bernard Pierce left to running back starved Jacksonville.

Rookie To Watch

Perriman will likely take over for Smith as Baltimore's primary receiver and deep threat. The first-round pick from Central Florida has not practiced since injuring his knee in camp on July 30 but Baltimore believes he'll be ready by the start of the regular season.

Marquee Match-up

The Ravens finish the regular season at division rival Cincinnati in a game that should have playoff implications. That game comes a week after Baltimore caps a three-game home stand with a matchup against bitter rival Pittsburgh. Will the Ravens have anything left when they go to Cincy?

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 10 at home against the Jaguars, who should be improved but not to Baltimore's standard.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 4 on the road against the Steelers. This is Baltimore's third road game in the first four weeks of the season.

Overall thoughts

Playing five of their first seven games away from Baltimore could put the Ravens in a hole they'll need to climb out of by season's end. The good news is two of those road games are against beatable Bay area teams – Oakland and San Francisco. On the flipside of the schedule, Baltimore finishes with six of nine games at home, including two three-game home stands, the last in the all-important month of December. The schedule is Baltimore's ally overall. The Ravens do not hit the road for than a month after playing at Arizona on Oct. 26. That game is followed by three consecutive home games against teams the Ravens should beat – San Diego, Jacksonville and St. Louis, with a bye week mixed in.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC NORTH

Steelers





PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Mister Obvious Says

Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin, in his ninth season, should really be named Teflon because claims that he is on the hot seat always do not stick. The Steelers saved him last year by going 11-5 before reaching the wild card game against Baltimore after they were kept out of the playoffs the previous two seasons. Tomlin's at a place with the Rooney Family where coaches simply do not leave unless they make the move on their own.

Biggest Additions

Nothing really of note except RB DeAngelo Williams coming over from Carolina to back up Le'Veon Bell.

Biggest Losses

The Steelers said good bye to iconic safety Troy Polamalu, who retired after 12 years in the NFL, all with Pittsburgh.

Rookie To Watch

LB Bud Dupree figures to give Pittsburgh fans what Polamalu provided them for so many years – an athletic, quick and dominant defender. He is a serious threat coming off the edge with 7 1/2 sacks at Kentucky last season.

Marquee Match-up

Week 12 matchup at Seattle shapes up to be one of the best of the season, especially with Pittsburgh coming off a bye week. Another big game follows the next week at home against Indianapolis.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 9 at home against the Raiders as part of a three-game home stand.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 16 on the road against the Ravens follows the games against Seattle, Indianapolis, Cincinnati and Denver. With Baltimore at the end of that stretch, that's certainly Murderers Row.

Overall thoughts

If Pittsburgh can survive that late-season challenge against those perennial playoff contenders, the Steelers can go as far as they want. Tomlin's toughest days of coaching appear to be behind him, especially with healthy veteran quarterback Ben Roethlisberger leading an exciting offense. The trio of Roethlisberger, Bell and receiver Antonio Brown is one of the best offensive groups of talent in the NFL.

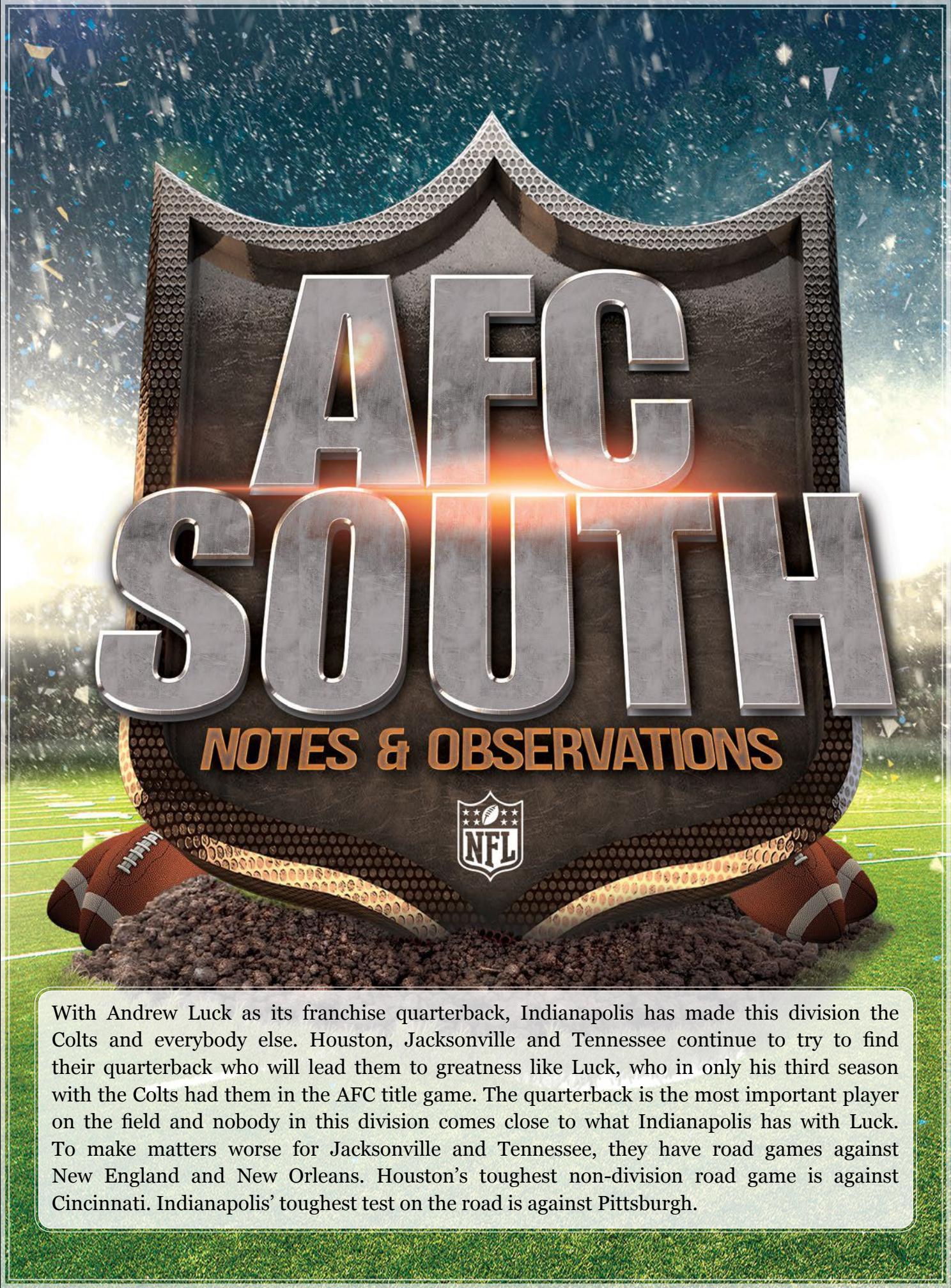


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AFC SOUTH

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS



With Andrew Luck as its franchise quarterback, Indianapolis has made this division the Colts and everybody else. Houston, Jacksonville and Tennessee continue to try to find their quarterback who will lead them to greatness like Luck, who in only his third season with the Colts had them in the AFC title game. The quarterback is the most important player on the field and nobody in this division comes close to what Indianapolis has with Luck. To make matters worse for Jacksonville and Tennessee, they have road games against New England and New Orleans. Houston's toughest non-division road game is against Cincinnati. Indianapolis' toughest test on the road is against Pittsburgh.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC SOUTH

COLTS





INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Mister Obvious Says

Free agent WR Andre Johnson and RB Frank Gore increase Indianapolis' potent offense. With Gore running the rock and Johnson, rookie receiver Phillip Dorsett and veteran T.Y. Hilton splitting the seams, Andrew Luck and his Colts' offense appears impossible to stop in all areas of the field.

Biggest Additions

You name it, there are plenty, including Johnson, Gore, and Dorsett on offense and LB Trent Cole, a 10-year vet with Philadelphia, joining Indianapolis' defense.

Biggest Losses

Indianapolis' top talent stayed intact. RB Trent Richardson (signed with the Raiders) was a two-time bust, first with the Browns and then with the Colts, and WR Hakeem Nicks (signed with the Titans), but their spots are filled with more than capable talent.

Rookie To Watch

Dorsett, who starred at Miami, is one of the most dynamic rookies to watch this season in the NFL with incredible quickness, precision route-running ability and capable hands.

Marquee Match-up

New England travels to Indianapolis in Week 6 to play the Colts, who will have nine days to prepare thanks to a schedule which has them playing on Thursday night the previous week at Houston.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 2 hosting the New York Jets, for the reasons we mentioned as to why the Jets were most likely to lose this game.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 13 at Pittsburgh in the midst of four of six games on the road.

Overall thoughts

The Colts' schedule is favorable with most of their toughest opponents traveling to Indianapolis, including Denver and former quarterback Peyton Manning in Week 9. New England and New Orleans also play in Indianapolis. If the Colts' offensive line shows improvement and their defensive front seven plays to its potential, they certainly can make another deep run in the NFL playoffs.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC SOUTH

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS





JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

Mister Obvious Says

The Blake Bortles era is underway. Forgive most of the NFL if it is not very excited. With a lack of a running game last year, Jacksonville's offense was stagnant to put it mildly. The Jaguars addressed that concern in the draft by taking running back T.J. Yeldon of Alabama in the second round. Bortles has capable young receivers such as Allen Hurns, Marqise Lee, Allen Robinson and rookie Rashad Greene but it will take some time for the newcomers and inexperienced talent to make Bortles and Jacksonville dangerous.

Biggest Additions

Two-time Pro Bowl TE Julius Thomas comes to Jacksonville from Denver, providing a big, reliable target for Bortles. Drafting Yeldon and acquiring free agent RB Bernard Pierce from Baltimore gives the Jaguars more punch out of the backfield.

Biggest Losses

WR Justin Blackmon, the former No. 5 pick overall in the NFL Draft, may have played his last down in the NFL suspended by the Commissioner.

Rookie To Watch

Yeldon will be Jacksonville's featured back, which means less pressure will be placed on Bortles. He gained 3,322 yards on 576 carries in three years with the Crimson Tide.

Marquee Match-up

The Jaguars host division favorite Indianapolis in Week 14. They will likely play the role of spoilers that late in the season.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 6 against visiting Houston, Jacksonville's first home game after three consecutive road games New England, Indianapolis and Tampa Bay.

Game Most Likely to Lose

So many to choose from, the Week 4 game at Indianapolis appears most daunting, a week after the Colts play at New England.

Overall thoughts

The unsettled defense was rocked by the season-ending knee injury early in camp to Dante Fowler Jr., a third-round defensive lineman out of Florida. Fellow defensive end Sen'Derrick Marks is also injured. Gus Bradley's third season as head coach appears to be formidable with his team still developing talent when it stays healthy. The offense has a lot of raw talent. This team is at least a couple of years away.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC SOUTH

HOUSTON TEXANS





HOUSTON TEXANS

Mister Obvious Says

The quarterback shuffle continues in Houston and who knows if the changes will make a difference. The Texans traded journeyman Ryan Fitzpatrick to the New York Jets and welcomed free agent Brian Hoyer from Cleveland with a two-year deal worth \$10.5 million. The acquisition of Hoyer creates a quarterback competition with returning QB Ryan Mallet who has played in just seven games in three NFL season. Whoever wins the quarterback job will not have Arian Foster to help him from the start. Foster is out two to three months after undergoing groin surgery.

Biggest Additions

Other than Hoyer, the most notable signing was that of former New England nose tackle Vince Wilfork, a five-time Pro Bowler who should bolster the defensive line alongside J.J. Watt. RB Chris Polk, a free agent backup from the Eagles, will get reps with Foster out.

Biggest Losses

Prolific WR Andre Johnson has moved to division rival Indianapolis which should make the Colts' offense even more formidable.

Rookie To Watch

With Johnson gone, the Texans are counting on rookie receiver Jaelen Strong of Arizona State to make great strides. Houston coach Bill O'Brien was critical of the third-round pick on HBO's "Hard Knocks" show early during camp but recently has mentioned Strong, well, looks stronger.

Marquee Match-up

New England comes to town on Dec. 13, a week before Houston travels to Indianapolis. O'Brien goes against his former employer, the Patriots and their quarterback Tom Brady. The heated sideline argument between O'Brien and Brady in 2011 is hard to forget.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 17 at home against the Jaguars in the season finale.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 15 on the road against the Colts, a week after hosting the Patriots. That's a tough couple of games late in the season.

Overall thoughts

The Texans have plenty of question marks at quarterback, running back and receiver on offense and in the secondary on defense. The defensive front is menacing with Watt, Wilfork and Jadeveon Clowney (when healthy). The linebackers and secondary behind them are unsettled. Too many holes exist to fill for Houston to challenge Indianapolis in this division. At least the Texans' schedule is not too overwhelming with its game at Cincinnati the toughest on the road outside of the division.



TENNESSEE TITANS





TENNESSEE TITANS

Mister Obvious Says

All eyes are on rookie quarterback Marcus Mariota, the Heisman winner, to provide hope to a franchise that has not advanced to the playoffs since 2008. Mariota has weapons around him to make Tennessee worth watching this year. From the above-average offensive line to running back Bishop Sankey to wide receivers Kendall Wright and Harry Douglas, the Titans are headed in the right direction. Mariota will also be coached by Ken Whisenhunt, who has developed winning quarterbacks Ben Roethlisberger, Philip Rivers and Kurt Warner.

Biggest Additions

Other than Mariota, the most noteworthy addition was a coach – longtime Steelers defensive coordinator Dick Lebeau – who joined the Titans to coach alongside friend and pupil Ray Horton, the defensive coordinator. They will try to fix a defense that ranked No. 27 in yards allowed last year. Former Redskins LB Brian Orakpo is a player who can help to make that happen if he stays healthy.

Biggest Losses

Two players retired – QB Jake Locker and OT Michael Roos – with Locker the most surprising. Roos played 10 years in his career. Locker was the No. 8 pick overall in the 2011 NFL draft. He never played an entire season because of injuries.

Rookie To Watch

Mariota has plenty of weapons to use to make his transition to the NFL less demanding. A fellow rookie, WR Dorial Green-Beckham, is a raw talent who will mature along with Mariota.

Marquee Match-up

Week 3 against Indianapolis at home kicks off four straight games at home. If the Titans can get by the Colts, they will enjoy a week off before hosting Buffalo, Miami and Atlanta. Between Sept. 20 to Nov. 1 Tennessee does not go on the road.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 13 at home against Jacksonville, only 17 days after facing the Jaguars on the road. Rematches that close generally favor the home team.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 17 at Indianapolis caps three of the last four games on the road. What could possibly help Tennessee is if the Colts have already clinched a playoff spot, which is likely.

Overall thoughts

The worst thing Tennessee fans can do is expect Mariota will work wonders as a rookie. Andrew Luck, Russell Wilson and Robert Griffin III played very well as rookies in 2012 but they were an exception to the rule. They did so against suspect competition in their divisions that season. The Titans, in rebuilding mode, have Luck and the Colts to contend with, as well as games at New Orleans and New England. A .500 season would be an achievement.

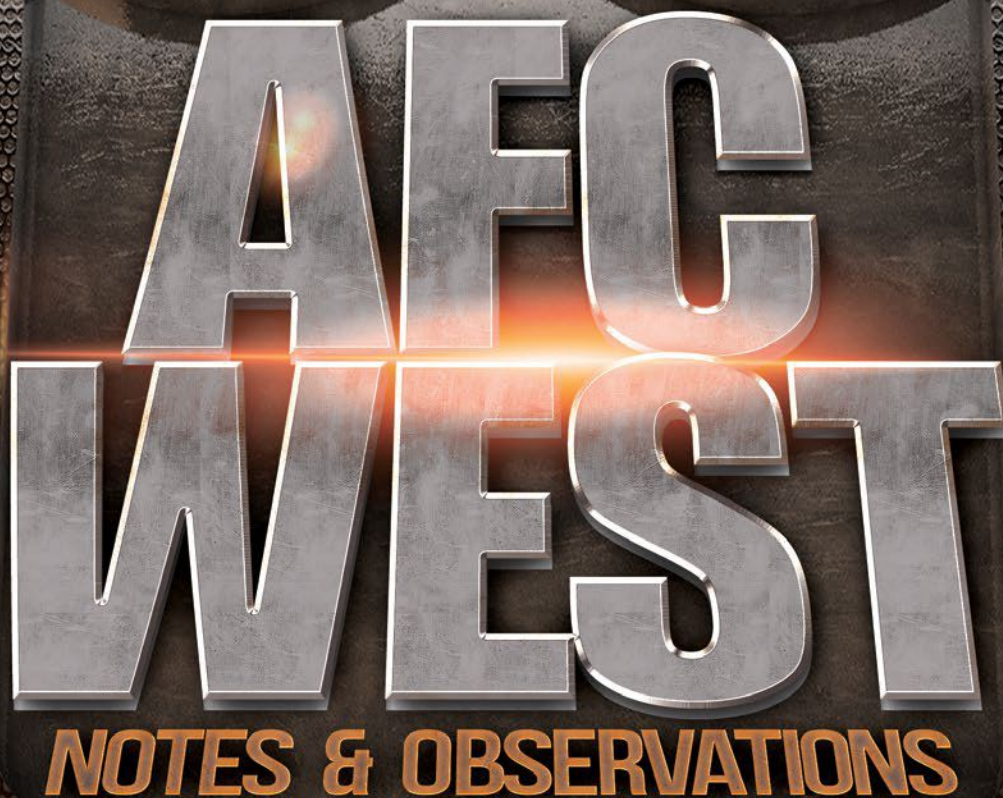


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A large, 3D-rendered shield-shaped graphic with a football field background. The shield has a dark, textured surface with a grid pattern. The words "AFC WEST" are written in large, bold, metallic letters across the center. Below that, "NOTES & OBSERVATIONS" is written in a smaller, orange, sans-serif font. At the bottom center of the shield is the NFL logo. The shield is flanked by two footballs and sits on a pile of dirt. The background is a bright, sunny football field with confetti falling from the sky.

AFC WEST

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS

Denver, Kansas City and San Diego can realistically think about the postseason. Oakland will be again on the outside looking in, with another new coach in Jack Del Rio. The Raiders, however, are not as distant from the others this year as years' past because of the promise of young quarterback Derek Carr and Del Rio's head coaching experience; he spent nine years as head coach at Jacksonville before acting as Denver's DC for the past couple. Carr, in his second year, has more confidence this year going up against veterans Peyton Manning, Alex Smith and Philip Rivers. The Chiefs and Chargers have the most difficult conference schedules with road games against Cincinnati, Green Bay and Baltimore. Denver, which has the best offense and defense in the division, plays at Indianapolis and Pittsburgh. Advantage Broncos.

NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC WEST

BRONCOS





DENVER BRONCOS

Mister Obvious Says

Denver's new coach Gary Kubiak is set for a deep playoff run. Other than some concerns of quality depth on the offensive line, the Broncos have one of the best teams on paper in the NFL. It all starts with Peyton Manning, who is aiming to end his career with a Super Bowl title. Manning has the weapons with RB C.J. Anderson and WR Demaryius Thomas. The defense is also solid with veterans DeMarcus Ware and Von Miller, two of the best pass rushers in the NFL.

Biggest Additions

FS Darian Stewart from St. Louis is a likely starter who bolsters an already good defensive secondary. TE Owen Daniels, who played for Kubiak at Houston and Baltimore, is with him again in Denver as a much-needed replacement for Julius Thomas.

Biggest Losses

Thomas' departure to Jacksonville takes away a favorite big target for Manning, especially in red zone situations.

Rookie To Watch

LB Shane Ray of Missouri thinks he is already worthy of Defensive Rookie of the Year honors. With his athleticism and pass-rushing ability, who can doubt him?

Marquee Match-up

Many to choose from with games against Green Bay, Indianapolis, New England and Pittsburgh. The game against the Patriots in Week 12 is a home game against the defending Super Bowl champions. Denver must beat the Patriots to show it can challenge New England come playoff time.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 14 at home against the Raiders, the start of Denver playing three of their last four games at home.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 9 at Indianapolis in Manning's second return to his former home. The game will be after a physical affair with Green Bay the week prior.

Overall thoughts

If Manning stays healthy behind a revamped offensive line and the Broncos take care of their home turf, Denver is in prime position to go 14-2 this season. They have a tough schedule but only two of the biggest tests are on the road, Indianapolis and Pittsburgh. Kubiak's aggressive, athletic defense will put Denver in position to win each week.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC WEST

SAN DIEGO
CHARGERS





SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Mister Obvious Says

Philip Rivers is here to stay with the Chargers, recently signing a four-year contract extension that includes a full no-trade clause. Before news broke of the signing, media and fans wondered if this season could be his last with San Diego, as he was in the final year of his previous deal. Now it appears Rivers will continue to be the face of the franchise to the very end when he will be 37 and a 15-year league veteran.

Biggest Additions

Bringing in WR Stevie Johnson (a former Buffalo star) gives Rivers a viable third option this year with Keenan Allen and Malcolm Floyd. If he plays to his potential, Rookie RB Melvin Gordon of Wisconsin will be a strong featured back that should take pressure off of Rivers.

Biggest Losses

Injury-plagued RB Ryan Matthews left for Philadelphia and WR Eddie Royal has gone off to Chicago where he has been one of the best wide-outs in camp.

Rookie To Watch

San Diego fans are mentioning Gordon in the same sentence as LT, LaDainian Tomlinson. That's a load of expectations but Gordon is a load himself, a strong runner listed at 6'1" and 210 pounds.

Marquee Match-up

Week 5's matchup against the Steelers at home. Great prime-time match-up between two teams with playoff potential.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 15 at home against the Dolphins. Last home game before the season concludes with two road match-ups against rivals Raiders and Broncos.

Game Most Likely to Lose

The Week 6 game at Green Bay comes six days after the Chargers host Pittsburgh on Monday night. Can the Chargers recover soon enough to play well in Lambeau?

Overall thoughts

The AFC West is much improved. The difference between making the playoffs and sitting home in January will be how San Diego takes care of business within its division, no small feat. 4 – 2 record in their division and they are looking good, anything less and they will be sipping Corona's in Del Mar come January.



CHIEFS





KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Mister Obvious Says

Kansas City will have at least one receiving touchdown this season after remarkably going without one last season. The Chiefs' acquisition of WR Jeremy Maclin from Philadelphia gives QB Alex Smith a deep threat and reliable receiver. RB Jamaal Charles is in position to have one of his best seasons as a featured back. Defensively, Denver might boast DeMarcus Ware and Von Miller but the Chiefs have quite a pass-rushing combination with linebackers Tamba Hali and Justin Houston.

Biggest Additions

Other than Maclin, the Chiefs' biggest offseason moves were acquiring free agent SS Tyvon Branch from Oakland and drafting rookie CB Marcus Peters. Branch and Peters will add much-needed depth to the secondary.

Biggest Losses

OL Rodney Hudson, a 2011 second-round pick by Kansas City, is off to division rival Oakland. He started 34 of his last 35 games with the Chiefs.

Rookie To Watch

Fourth-round LB Ramik Wilson has impressed Kansas City coach Andy Reid for his knack to be around the ball in preseason drills, scrimmages and games. The impressive performance is good enough to have him challenging for a starting job.

Marquee Match-up

Kansas City's early-season schedule is a grind with consecutive games against Denver, Green Bay and Cincinnati. The Week 3 game at Green Bay is the marquee one of them all, providing Reid an opportunity to see the mettle of his team coming off the home game against the Broncos.

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 17 at home against Oakland, capping the regular season, will likely have playoff implications.

Game Most Likely to Lose

The week 3 game at Green Bay is too much to ask, coming off the game against Denver.

Overall thoughts

With its offseason moves, Kansas City has talent on offense that no longer takes a backseat to its division rivals. Maclin brings a lot of excitement to the Chiefs' passing game, which was lacking last season under Reid. The Chiefs play four of their last six games at home. That should play a big part in them being a factor in the AFC playoff race.



NFL SEASON OUTLOOK - AFC WEST

OAKLAND
RAIDERS





OAKLAND RAIDERS

Mister Obvious Says

The seven-year Darren McFadden experiment is over with him leaving to Dallas but the Raiders are in good shape in the backfield with Trent Richardson and Latavius Murray carrying the ball. Derek Carr's ability at quarterback gives the Raiders some offensive firepower, especially with newly-acquired veteran WR Michael Crabtree as one of his targets.

Biggest Additions

C Rodney Hudson coming in from Kansas City gives Oakland stability on the line, especially as the snap partner of Carr. Drafting rookie WR Amari Cooper and bringing in Crabtree gives Carr more options with the pass.

Biggest Losses

McFadden went seven unfulfilled years with Oakland, leaving fans wanting more out of the running game.

Rookie To Watch

Cooper has athleticism and great hands to make huge plays this year for Carr and the Raiders. With Cooper's ability to run with the ball, we expect new head coach Jack Del Rio to also use Cooper on end-arounds.

Marquee Match-up

Week 15 against Green Bay at home comes five days before Christmas. Will the Packers' collective heads be into it?

Game Most Likely To Win

Week 8 when the Jets come to town. Similar to Oakland, New York is in transition but at least the Raiders have a seasoned head coach.

Game Most Likely to Lose

Week 14 at Denver, in the midst of Oakland's arduous final five game run: Kansas City twice, Denver, Green Bay and San Diego.

Overall thoughts

The Raiders may not end their 12-year streak of losing seasons but they possess more hope with Carr at quarterback and with weapons such as Crabtree and Cooper by his side. Del Rio knows how to endure, coaching nine years at Jacksonville. He comes from a winning organization at Denver. Not all hope is lost for the Raiders this time around.



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